


# Braille Monitor



SEPTEMBER, 1976

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



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# THE BRAILLE MONITOR

*A Publication of the*  
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND  
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THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND IS NOT AN ORGANIZATION  
SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND—IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES.

## THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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\* \* \*

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"I give, devise, and bequeath unto NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND, a District of Columbia nonprofit corporation, the sum of \$\_\_\_\_ (or, "\_\_\_\_percent of my net estate", or "the following stocks and bonds: \_\_\_\_") to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons."

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.

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Approximately 2500 people were present at the general sessions of the National Federation of the Blind convention in Los Angeles during the first week of July, 1976.





1535 people attended the annual banquet at the National Federation of the Blind convention at the Los Angeles Convention Center, July 8, 1976.



President Kenneth Jernigan speaks at the annual banquet at the National Federation of the Blind convention at the Los Angeles Convention Center, July 8, 1976.





At the banquet Reverend Howard May, President of the NFB of Connecticut and Chairman of the Scholarship Committee presents a \$1200 scholarship to Peggy Pinder, who has just graduated from college and plans to enter Yale Law School in September.



First Vice President Don Capps presides at the NFB banquet in Los Angeles while Dr. Andrew S. Adams, Commissioner of the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration receives the Newell Perry award.



At the banquet Second Vice President Ralph Sanders presents the Jacobus ten Broek award to Perry Sundquist, editor of the **Monitor** and President of the National Federation of the Blind of California.

## CONVENTION ROUNDUP

*Editor's Note.—The importance of the papers and discussions which occurred at this year's Convention makes it necessary to devote to them not only the entire September issue but most of the October issue as well.*

It was the largest, happiest, most hard-working, noisiest, action-packed, greatest Convention ever.

There is a unique kind of joy in the air when Federationists gather and it was especially noticeable at the headquarters hotel. Federationists were on the scene earlier and in greater numbers than ever before. But, then, we were in the City of Los Angeles where the people think of public events only in terms of "big." Federationists, too, thought big in terms of delegations: Hawaii came with 34, Maryland with 91, Pennsylvania had 58, Minnesota 72, South Carolina 62. Large delegations came also from the western states. Last year California answered Iowa's challenge and promised to have twice as many as they. The wager was met. California registered 330 and Iowa 151.

Since no single hotel in the area was large enough to handle all of us or our general sessions, delegates roomed in a number of hotels. The Biltmore Hotel served as headquarters. General sessions and the banquet were held in the rooms of the enormous Convention Center, where we were quite comfortable.

Shuttle buses, which ran at regular intervals all day, between the Biltmore and the Convention Center made the transfer from one site to the other a matter of no moment

if the singing and general conviviality on board were any indication. The Convention Center's cafeteria and restaurant were available for breakfast and lunch which made getting those meals an easy task. The time saved by not having to go elsewhere for food was well spent by many gathering NFB materials and supplies from tables set up in the spacious lobby.

The headquarters hotel was the site of a variety of Convention activities. The Executive Committee and other groups met at the Biltmore. The Exhibit Hall there was always crowded and the Merchants Division delighted those who came by supplying cold soft drinks. The Elegant White Elephant booth attracted many buyers for the items donated by members. The proceeds of the sale went to the Jacobus tenBroek Memorial Endowment Fund. Florida had one of the most popular items for sale—NFB T-shirts. NFB jewelry and aids and appliances all sold well.

Food and fellowship, those basic necessities of life, to say nothing of fun, were in good supply. The President and his official family were housed in the Imperial Suite, a whole series of public and private apartments. The main or more public portion had high ceilings, beautiful dark paneling, and magnificent furnishings, all with a turn-of-the-century West Coast elegance. President and Mrs. Jernigan, in true Southern style, offered all comers a delightful array of foods from Kentucky Ham, Wisconsin cheese, and other such delicacies, to a wide variety of homemade cookies from Iowa and elsewhere, along with an abundance of fresh fruit grown in California—all washed down with gallons of NFB tea. Everyone

was urged to partake of this bounty, a gesture especially appreciated by those who, perforce, came with slim wallets.

The California Suite offered its own brand of hospitality and many came to enjoy what was offered, but those unfortunate few who came seeking peace and quiet went away empty.

Since Federationists are a gregarious lot, one could always find a large number of people in the hospitality room—the Crystal Room on the Main Galeria at the Biltmore. John Lopez, president of the East Los Angeles Chapter, and Mrs. Lopez served as chairmen of the committee to provide music for the hospitality room. The professional groups which generously donated their time and talent were: John and Maria Lopez and their group, known professionally as the Inner Visions, performed on Sunday night as well as during intermissions of the other bands. On Monday the Ray Agosto trio provided music, and on Wednesday the Saints—Henry Steinmetz's group—performed. Henry is president of the Cerritos Valley Chapter of the NFB of California. On Thursday the Inner Visions took over again.

The Convention was not all fun, food, and fellowship. The theme of this Convention, "Equal Rights for the Blind," provided a balance in hours of serious and thoughtful discussion.

Devotional nonsectarian services were held each morning. They began early enough to allow sufficient time to get to the Convention on time. These sessions were well attended, as they always have been. Again this year, First Vice President Donald C. Capps supervised the program.

### Sunday, July 4, 1976

Official Convention activities began on Sunday, July 4, when the registration area opened at ten o'clock in the morning; and the lines were already long and wide. At the end of the day 1,199 people had registered.

Because of many more activities and committees than is possible to accommodate in the time of the official sessions, many now take place on Sunday afternoon and evening. Sessions of the PAC Plan Committee, with E. U. Parker as chairman; the Dog Guide Committee, led by Patrick Comorato; the Public Relations Workshop under the general supervision of Ralph Sanders; White Cane and State Fundraising, chaired by Anthony Mannino; the Committee on Parents and Adoption which Susan Ford leads; and the Music Group served by chairman Bruce Breslauer, occurred on Sunday. The Resolutions Committee, chaired by the indefatigable Manuel Urena, began its work on Sunday afternoon and attracted a large attendance and much participation by all present. The afternoon and evening were topped off by the 4:00 to 8:00 wine and cheese tasting party put on by the NFB Cultural Exchange and International Program (CEIP) Committee. The affair was a smashing success both as a fundraiser for the committee and for the pleasure it provided to those who attended. Since it was held on July 4, it seemed a most appropriate way to celebrate the Bicentennial.

### Monday, July 5

The Biltmore Bowl was crowded with delegates and members who came to watch the Executive Committee conduct the organization's business. The President called the meeting to order. After the rolcall,



which indicated all members were present, Perry Sundquist, president of the host affiliate, welcomed the Convention to California. The President reminded the Executive Committee that four of its members had terms which expired this year: Joyce Scanlan, Robert Eschbach, Ned Graham, and Hazel Staley. Ned had told President Jernigan that he did not wish to run again and it was so announced. The President said that Ned was one of the finest Federationists in the country and that while he would be missed on the Committee, his wishes would be respected. President Jernigan then went on to recall that there always has been a good deal of discussion of the whys and wherefores every time someone has stepped down from office. It was time to remind the members, he continued, that election to the Executive Committee does not carry life tenure. The Committee should reflect geographic and political considerations as well as the ability to be part of the collective leadership of this organization. Office holders in this organization gain honor and prestige and many responsibilities. Since there are only thirteen seats there should be some rotation. Otherwise the Committee would have to be enlarged to an unworkable size so that every state could be represented.

A hearing was held on which delegation to seat from New Jersey, the Executive Committee sitting as the organization's Credentials Committee. At the request of its elected president, an organizing team had been sent to New Jersey. The old group, those not reelected to State office, did not respond well to this activity and as a result two delegations were present in California. Both sides were allowed equal time to present their cases, time for rebuttal, and time for questions from the Committee. In the end, the recommendation to

the Convention was that the New Jersey Council of the Blind, doing business as the National Federation of the Blind of New Jersey, be the delegation seated.

The financial situation of the National Federation of the Blind was thoroughly discussed. It included the decision that FEDCO be dissolved and those matters be handled in the future in some manner to be proposed by our accountants and legal counsel.

Perry Sundquist recommended, after some very graceful words about each, that Dr. Isabelle Grant, Dr. Jay Freid, and Marc Maurer (as president of the NFB Student Division) be reelected to the NFB Board of Directors. The Executive Committee was in unanimous agreement.

The Executive Committee then heard Resolutions 76-A and 76-B and discussed the matters contained in them. It was then decided that the Executive Committee would bring these resolutions to the Convention with the recommendation that they be adopted. [Editor's Note.—All the Resolutions adopted by the Convention are reprinted elsewhere in this issue.]

Monday afternoon and evening were devoted to meetings of special divisions and committees: National Federation of the Blind in Computer Science, Curtis Willoughby, president; National Association of Blind Secretaries and Transcribers, Gloria Cusenya, president; Blind Merchants Division, Art Segal, president; Blind Lawyers Division, James Lewis, chairman; Student Division, Marc Maurer, president; Sheltered Shop Employees Division, Ysidro Urena, president; Public Relations Committee, Ralph Sanders, chairman; CEIP Committee, Rami Rabby, chairman; Research

and Evaluation Committee, Mike Hingson, chairman; Membership Committee, Joyce Scanlan, chairman; Correspondence Committee, Perry Sundquist, chairman. In addition, the PAC Plan Committee held an open house, there was a Public Relations Workshop, the Resolutions Committee held another session, and the Melodonic Chorus gave a concert in the Biltmore Bowl.

Special committees of the National Federation of the Blind also met during the week: Scholarship Committee, Reverend Howard May, chairman; Jacobus tenBroek Memorial Endowment Fund, Lawrence Marcelino, Fund Secretary; Committee on the Senior Blind, Allen Jenkins, chairman; Human Rights Committee, Ted Young, chairman; and the Committee on Library Services, Mrs. Florence Shropshire, chairman.

The Convention Center provided a very large room for our general sessions—a room for ceremony as well as business. It seemed most appropriate that during the week various military and paramilitary groups trooped the colors, that we saluted our flag daily, led by Lee Dyer of California, and, as with any large group, we sang.

## Tuesday, July 6

The Convention hall was large. The state delegations were large. The speakers' dais extended for at least forty feet. With more than 2,500 people on the floor, it took a while for everyone to find his state banner and be seated. But it was not too long after the appointed hour when President Jernigan called the Convention to order. The walls of the hall being sturdy, the reverberating applause and shouts which usually follow the fall of the first gavel, did not bring them down. The Convention assembled

then settled down to the business at hand, after drawing for that first one hundred dollar bill, won appropriately by Mitch Pomerantz of California. Don Capps introduced the Reverend John Niceley, ordained Baptist minister and first vice president of the NFB of North Carolina, to give the invocation.

Lawrence (Muzzy) Marcelino, first vice president of the NFB of California, welcomed the Convention. Perry Sundquist, president of the California affiliate, added a few words and then noted that our National President has a penchant for flying all around the country and that we were assembled in a city located in the heart of the aerospace industry. He called upon Sharon Gold, president of the Antelope Valley Chapter, NFB of California, who presented President Jernigan with an L-1011, bearing appropriate NFB marking and named NFB-1. The President's reply should have been expected: "I have sometimes been accused of flying into a rage. I have sometimes been accused of flying in the face of reason. I have not in recent years been accused of flying in an airplane. [Laughter.] However, I want you to know that I appreciate this fine airplane and it will be placed in a position of honor in the National Office."

Tony Mannino, Executive Secretary of the NFB of California, with due ceremony introduced the Mayor of the City of Los Angeles, Thomas Bradley. The mayor delivered a most unusual welcoming address:

"President Jernigan, delegates to this Convention of the National Federation of the Blind, I am delighted on the behalf of all of Los Angeles, to welcome you to our great city. Now, I know, Mr. Jernigan,



that it doesn't sound as though we are really extending a welcome to you. You're having trouble with the microphone; we gave you an apple crate for a podium; and Muzzy, here, claims that the California delegation is the greatest of all at this Convention. [Cheers from California.] He didn't intend any disrespect for the rest of the fifty states throughout the Union. California may not be the greatest delegation but it certainly is the loudest. [Much laughter.]

"I am honored this morning to come to share with you the formal opening ceremonies and to wish you well throughout your deliberations at this Convention. I know of the great work that this Federation has done over the years in the courts. The landmark decision which came down just a few days ago that said to the sheltered shopworkers in Chicago and to all others in this country, 'You, too, have civil rights. You, too, have the right to collective bargaining.' [Applause.] You have been a leader in the field of legislation, pushing for those changes in our laws that will bring equality to the blind. California, I am proud to say, was a leader in that field, and its White Cane Law says to all people who provide services that they cannot discriminate against the blind simply because of that disability. This is only an example of all the work that you are doing to bring true equality, to bring civil rights to the blind as well as all others. I am impressed by the fact that the theme for this Convention is Equal Rights for the Blind. We've fought over the past two hundred years to deliver on the promise that was contained in our great Constitution. Group by group, bit by bit, we have brought equality to the blacks and other ethnic minorities, to women, and finally, it seems that at long last we are going to bring that kind of equality, those civil rights which are written

into the Constitution, to the physically handicapped and to the blind.

"My association and my empathy with the blind I guess goes back many years. When I was in high school I served as a reader for a young blind classmate. That young man went on to secure his law degree from UCLA and become one of the fine lawyers of our community. His determination, I think, was once again reemphasized just a few weeks ago when a young student from Temple University said that he wanted to do that which he felt he was born to do, be a doctor. He refused to be turned aside by those who gave him advice that he couldn't make it in medical school. In fact, he did make it, with flying colors. We were all thrilled as he stood to take his doctor of medicine degree just a few weeks ago, along with the rest of his graduating class at the university. The determination of that young blind student served as inspiration to all of us that if you have determination enough, if you refuse to be turned back by those who would discourage you, anything in life is possible. I salute him. I salute all of you for your determination in life. I hope that throughout the course of this Convention you will be further committed to carry on your great fight to bring civil rights to the blind; to bring equality as a fact, not just a concept. I wish you well, not only here in Los Angeles as I hope you enjoy yourselves, but as you return to your home communities more dedicated than ever to secure the rights and liberties guaranteed in the Constitution to every man and woman in this country. God bless you. Good luck to you." [Cheers and applause.]

Dr. Dennis R. Wyant, Executive Staff Member of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, and

Secretary of the Blinded Veterans Association, brought us greetings from both groups. He said, in part: "I do want to say 'thank you' on behalf of the Blinded Veterans Association for everything the Federation has done which has not only helped blinded veterans but the blind of the United States. We are aware of this. We have crisscrossed, the NFB and the BVA, several times this year"—pointing out that they had been supporting some of the things we wanted, too. He offered BVA services in solving employment problems and hoped that the two groups would continue to work together.

The morning session was completed with the rollcall of the states, each delegation naming a representative to serve on the Nominating Committee. Several absent members were remembered and their presence missed. Last to be seated was the delegation from New Jersey. After listening to more remarks from both sides, and hearing the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Convention, after a rollcall vote which was unanimous, seated the New Jersey Council of the Blind doing business as the National Federation of the Blind of New Jersey.

The afternoon session featured the Presidential Report:

### Presidential Report

"I'd say by any test one would want to make—although we've had problems—it has been our best year in the Federation. A brief review of the year will show why this is so. Last year at the Convention we were preparing for the National Press Club address. That address turned into a demonstration of what we as an organization can

do when we work together and work determinedly. To refresh your memory: We had first been told that National Public Radio would likely carry the address which I made at the Press Club in Washington. We were then told that they would not carry it. Word went out to alert the state and local leaders throughout the Nation and the calls rolled in to such an extent that first they said they would likely carry it, then they said they would carry it, and then they said they be on hand and carry it live, which, indeed, they did do. [Applause.] I think that demonstrates what we can do as a group when we work together. We also talked last year about the publicity which was coming in national magazines. It did come. We have had ads for the Federation in many of the national magazines, such as *Time*, *Sports Illustrated*, and others. Those have been widely read and we have received from the public letters of inquiry as to services available, about the Federation, about blindness, which clearly indicate that these articles, these ads, have been seen and heeded.

"Also, from last Convention to now, is the time that we had a changed relationship with the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind. [Applause.] Without taking the time to give you all the details—I assume you've read them in the *Monitor*—the leadership of the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind has been working quite closely with us. This, of course, as might have been expected, has raised the ire of NAC. The NAC people have, therefore, undertaken to attack and smear the leadership of the National Council of State Agencies. You will read more details about that in upcoming issues of the *Monitor*. But I think for this report it is sufficient to say that we have indicated the value we place on working with the National Council of

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State Agencies for the Blind and the leadership of that organization has indicated the value it places on working with the organized blind movement, and that's a step forward. [Applause.]

"This was also the year that the Iowa lawsuit was settled. That lawsuit [applause] started in 1972. Members of the American Council of the Blind undertook what they, I am sure, recognized to be a harassing tactic of bringing a lawsuit against me and the members of the Iowa Commission for the Blind Board. That lawsuit was settled in our favor without ever going to trial. Then these people went forward and appealed to the Supreme Court of the State on the grounds that they should have been allowed to take depositions and testimony. The Supreme Court then gave them some time to do that. That would have been a year ago March. By December of last year they had not exercised the right given them by the Supreme Court. Under the laws of civil procedure in the State of Iowa, if you do not bring a case to trial during a year, it will be dismissed if notice has been sent out to that effect. Such notice was sent out in August of last year. In December they came and asked the Court to extend the time for them, apparently wishing to keep that lawsuit alive forever if they could. They asked to have it extended on two grounds: (1) that they had been trying to arrange a fee with their lawyers; (2) that they had lost the court file on it. [Laughter.] The Court listened and was apparently unimpressed. I say that because the Court denied their motion, dismissed the case as of January 2 of this year. They appealed the dismissal. That appeal was denied and that lawsuit is now behind us. [Applause.]

"We have published a great deal of material this year that has been useful to the

public at large, to blind persons, and to families and friends of blind persons. Illustrative of that is the pamphlet called "Blindness and Disorders of the Eye," which first appeared in the *Monitor* and for which we have had thousands of requests. It has been placed in many libraries and is used by many agencies for the blind in the country.

"This year we have raised money from a number of foundations and have put time and effort into the promotion of the Kurzweil Reading Machine. That machine is moving forward and I believe that the prototype models are now available. Mr. Kurzweil is here at the Convention and does have a model that he's prepared to demonstrate.

"You will later on be hearing reports of developments on the White House Conference for Handicapped Persons. The President of the National Federation of the Blind—in an announcement made by Mr. Jack Smith, Executive Director of the White House Conference, a short time ago—was named as a special consultant to that conference. [Applause.] I think that is not because the President of this organization is any given individual, and I think it's not because primarily of the position I hold. I think it is in recognition of the growing influence and prestige of the organized blind movement.

"Most recently, of course, is the victory in the Chicago Lighthouse case. [Cheers and applause.] There are other things which I might mention, but if you take that brief list and look at it as a whole and as a pattern, it illustrates, I believe, the growing influence and recognition of our movement and points up the statement that I made that this has indeed been the best year that the organized blind movement has had.

"We are, as I indicated this morning, going to release public service spots—if you people will get ready to roll the films—just in a minute; I'll tell you—we are going to let you see now the spots which will be issued for this year. These are termed Series 5 and Series 6 of the TV public service spots. Now we still have the earlier sets and they're still quite useable. We also have radio public service spots and we also have the five-minute Radio Pioneers program available. I think that what we need to do is either to have the state president or a representative from the state go by if you want these spots given to you. Each set of these TV spots costs several dollars, and, therefore, we should not have two or three people from the same area going by and saying, 'Well, I'll take a set of the spots,' and then working to get them on stations. Each state ought to decide how it wants to make this work and then we can give you one set of these spots to take home. We can also mail as many sets as you want but the state ought to do this as a unit so that we don't waste money on it. At this stage, we will look at the six public service spots. Set 5 has three spots in it; Set 6 also has three spots. You can order these in sets of three. Here are the spots. . . . [Applause.]

"When we get an inquiry as a result of this, I refer it to the state or local leaders involved, depending on what area of the country it comes from. Again, this is something the National Office can do, produce this kind of service spot. It is now up to you as state and local members around the country to see that our spots get on to radio and television. We can do that if we will, but these spots do absolutely no good—as a matter of fact they simply waste our resources—unless we get out and make it happen by seeing that they get on to radio and television. It's up to you. They're there.

"Let me talk to you a little bit about the year financially. We've talked a lot about finances this year. The Edlund Letters have been sent out far and wide. We have Edlund Letters at this Convention. You should get those and send them to family and friends. Give them to people in your communities and urge that they respond. We can thus make a list of people who will give to the organization. The PAC Plan is beginning to move forward, as you've heard. We had none of it last year at this time. By the end of the year we had raised \$7,500 for the year with PAC. This year I imagine the Pre-Authorized Check Plan will raise for us in the neighborhood of \$40,000 or more. But we are already at a higher rate than that on a monthly basis. By next year it ought to be still higher. The effectiveness of our fundraising effort is demonstrated by the fact that in 1974 we lost almost \$60,000—that is, we spent almost \$60,000 more than we took in—and in 1975 we came into the black almost \$60,000, or \$120,000 difference. [Applause.] That is attributable to three things: The National Office of the Federation spent about \$10,000 less in 1975 than it did in 1974, so we effected some economies. Next, we were up in donations and contributions from our own members, up considerably. You will find from the report that will be given, that the contributions from our members were around \$60,000, and that with the PAC Plan, the White Cane Week drive and others, we are dealing with well above the \$60,000 mark. And then you had a third item. Our mail campaigns this year brought in more money than they did in 1974. That, however, will be short-lived, I think, for we do have fundraising problems. The new state laws that I mentioned to the Executive Committee yesterday, and there are an increasing number of them, are a factor plus the fact that our opponents—and we



have very clear evidence of this—are setting about trying to sic the states' attorneys general on us to see if they can inhibit our mail campaign. As a matter of fact, we have some evidence that would indicate to us that the American Council of the Blind is the recipient of some rather heavy contributions. We can't prove this yet, but we have some documentation which would indicate that the American Foundation for the Blind is pumping massive amounts of money into the American Council of the Blind. Now, I hope that we can document that indisputably. If we can, the report will be made. But you see what is attempted, if that is so, is the squeeze effect of trying to cut off our funds and of trying to finance what we have always felt to be the company union. [Applause.]

"As a matter of fact, we are in the situation of having to decide whether this organization means enough to the individuals in it so that it can be financed by us or whether it does not. I will repeat quickly the substance of what I said yesterday in the Executive Committee. It is a good thing, perhaps, for chapters to make donations. The danger of a chapter or state affiliate making a monthly PAC Plan contribution is that it will salve the conscience of the individuals in the chapter and that each individual in that chapter will not feel bound to do something. And furthermore, that the total chapter contribution—which might be \$10, \$25, \$50, \$75 or whatever per month—will still be less than what you would have if individuals made contributions. As I've said, some people who have their first jobs put fifty or more dollars per month into the PAC Plan, and some people who are working are putting in \$100 per month; some people who are on Supplemental Security Income are putting in what they can each month. It must be according to the conscience of

each individual. You will remember that I also said to you yesterday that I know one guy who said that he would really do it but it was a matter of principle. That's right; it is a matter of principle—it depends upon what principle and how. I also would say to you that when you hear the statement, that some people have made, 'If I were to put in as much of my income that you in a sense imply I should, it would affect my whole life-style.' That answer to that is obvious. It is the one I made yesterday: 'That's right, it should. The Federation has affected your whole life-style.' [Applause.] Ask the sheltered shop employees; they can tell you. [Applause.]

"We are up against decisions affecting our fundraising in many respects. I told you yesterday that our corporation FEDCO, which we bought in 1967 for \$500,000, must now be reviewed as to what we do with it. . . . You will remember I reported yesterday to the Executive Committee, we made more money by owning FEDCO to the tune of \$1,526,441.09. Now if you consider that we bought FEDCO, paid \$500,000 for it, that we paid that \$500,000 out of money that we would not have had, that we then made a million-and-a-half dollars more money than we would have made because we owned FEDCO, it puts into perspective something else: At the time we bought FEDCO most of the state fundraising laws we are dealing with were not in existence. Furthermore, we did not have the intensity of attack upon us. The time has come when Bernard Gerchen, who has been the General Manager of FEDCO, says that he simply does not want to continue to be 'a fundraiser or to be regarded as one,' and there are legal consequences to that in many of the states. Also, the lawyers and accountants tell me that there is some question about whether we ought to have

a 'fundraiser,' and FEDCO is a fundraising company. Now, all of that leads to the recommendation which the Executive Committee is bringing to this Convention. We have been amortizing our purchase of FEDCO because we have not been leaving money in FEDCO. We have been draining FEDCO right down each year and putting that money into our treasury. That's the million and a half plus that I've been talking about over and above what we would have. We believe that the time has now come for the Federation to raise funds for itself and to purchase services. We can still purchase services and supplies and raise our funds but we think we ought to dissolve the company, FEDCO. This is still a legal and accounting matter but it's also a Convention decision. The amortization is such, as you'll see from the financial report, that at the end of last year we still had \$214,000 unamortized on FEDCO, but amortization has gone forward at the tune of about \$3,000 a month since that time; we are now under \$200,000. The General Manager of FEDCO tells me that if we dissolve that corporation, we can pay off all of FEDCO's debts plus bringing into our treasury, in addition to other things, some \$60,000. As I have said, the other figures speak for themselves. Therefore, we bring to you a recommendation that this Convention authorize the Executive Committee and the President to initiate steps to dissolve the FEDCO Corporation, if that seems desirable from a legal and accounting standpoint. We'll talk about that in a minute and put that to a vote but I wanted to bring it to you and that's why I brought it up yesterday so that you'd have plenty of time to think about it.

"We have engaged in other lawsuits during the year. We financed a lawsuit in Indiana to help a young woman named Linda

Garshwiler, who was denied the right to have a teaching position. She had been hired and then they discovered she was blind and they cancelled the contract. We went to court. We prevailed. She did get a job and she did get employment. [Applause and cheers.]

"We assisted with the *Gurmankin* case in Pennsylvania. That case, too, was successful. It was handled on constitutional grounds and also under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. That case is now on appeal. The school board is appealing. They were ordered to pay her salary for several years back pay because she wasn't hired and to give her a teaching position. So, again, it looks as though we are going to prevail in that case. [Applause.]

"Teacher cases have been plentiful—there was one in the State of Kansas. We did not give financial help but we did give advice on that case and offered to give testimony and what assistance we could. That case was settled by negotiation.

"The Cleveland Society for the Blind lawsuit—the judge decided that he did not have jurisdiction over the case. Our lawyer tells us that he thinks that was a bad decision and we're underscoring that by appealing to the Federal Court of Appeals. I hope we will prevail there.

"In Pennsylvania the lawsuit brought by the State Charitable Solicitations group, through the attorney general's office, against us for fundraising has still not been settled. We have made an appeal to the Supreme Court of the State. That was over a year ago. It has not been settled. It is still right where it was.

"Lawsuits, in other words, aplenty are around the country and we are engaging in



our share of them and, indeed, getting our share of victories out of them.

"Indiana had a name change this year to the National Federation of the Blind of Indiana. [Applause.] We will also be chartering the NFB of New Jersey at our Thursday night meeting. [Applause.]

"There are what might be called some in-house matters that should be mentioned to you. We have options on our Des Moines Office at about \$1.50 a foot, including utilities and some security, which is an unheard-of low amount. That runs through August of 1978. I've now renegotiated and got an option through 1981, from August of 1978 through August of 1981 and that will be at the rate of \$2.50 per foot, which is still a mighty low amount for good first-class office space. We have sent more items out from the Des Moines Office this year than we've ever sent out before. Specifically, we have mailed out, and this will give you some idea of the flood of material pouring out from your National Office, 283,586 pieces of print material from June 1, 1975 through May 31, 1976; 8,041 pieces of Braille material; 12,643 disc recordings. We have sold 10,507 items. We have sold 9,029 pieces of jewelry. We have sent out 281 service spots—or a total of 316,987 pieces of material. That means that per month we have sent out 26,415 items.

"*The Braille Monitors*, you will remember, are available in bound volumes in print. From 1957, when we started the *Monitor*, through 1974, including the Index, the price is \$350 per set. Local libraries can be persuaded to buy those. If a chapter or local affiliate wishes a complete bound set, of course they can be had. But very often you can also get community institutions to order them. The Index from 1957 to 1974

is \$20 if you buy it separately. *The Monitor* for 1975 bound volume is \$25, and the Index \$5.

"If you order items from the Des Moines Office, please give us enough time so that we can send them by the most economical method. If you tell me you've got to have them in a hurry, we'll try to do it, but you're spending our money at a great rate if we have to send them by air to you and they're heavy. Also, I remind you of the coasters that, like the poor, are with us always. [Laughter.] Some we have sold even at this Convention. It seems to me that we have a Coasters Committee and I wish that it would function and sell more of them. Our money and our shelf space are tied up. You will be hearing talk later about candy so I won't go into that. One final item: Remember that if you want to sell greeting cards, or you wish to purchase greetings cards to send to friends, those can be had through the Des Moines Office. You can ask for details at the Information Table.

"I want to announce to you something else that I believe will be of great interest. For a long time we have served as a national information center on blindness. We have encouraged people to call or write the Des Moines Office or the Washington Office and we have, indeed, served as a center on blindness information. As of last Friday, we published in the Washington, D.C., newspapers, in order to protect the name, and we also applied, officially and formally, for patents and trademarks for the "National Blindness Information Center." Now, we have an in-WATS line to the Washington, D.C., Office, so that you can call from anywhere in the Nation without cost. I would urge you to use this line with restraint and reason. If you can afford to pay for a call to the Washington Office, then pay for

it yourself. If, however, that is a problem, you can use this line. Jim Gashel, and as we can afford it, staff or volunteers, will man or woman this line, and will try to answer any question dealing with services in any state, will try to do research, will try to answer questions concerning anything dealing with blindness; in other words, we will truly serve as a National Blindness Information Center. The in-WATS number is (800) 424-9770. We have begun by having a ten-hour per month WATS line but we can increase that to what we need to. Again, it's a matter of what kinds of funds we have available.

QUESTIONER. What number do we use if we wish to pay for the call ourselves?

President JERNIGAN. All right. Area code (202) 785-2974. That is the number of the Washington Office. We would have put this in Des Moines, but I'm trying as best I can to lighten some of the load of the presidency.

"Let me talk with you a moment about that, and it will be a moment. I'm reluctant to bring this item up but I think that it is best that I do. I must tell you that I have had some health problems during the past year. I believe that they're not of such a nature that I can't handle them if I can find a way to work only a moderately excessive amount. I guess I bring them up to you at all for two or three reasons: It's not that I complain about the amount of work I do because I feel that if I'm going to accept the presidency, I'm obligated to work as hard as I can work. It's not that I begrudge or regret doing it. It is simply that my time is yours to use as you will but I would like you to use it wisely, because if you make me waste it then I can't do other things that I might do. It is also to say to you that

it has caused me to consider somewhat the future of the presidency of this organization. I do intend to allow my name to be placed in nomination this time, again, for President. [Applause.] But I would say to you that if you see fit to elect me as President you should also think in terms—and this is always true—you should think in terms of succession. Don Capps has been an exceptionally able, an exceptionally competent, and an exceptionally conscientious First Vice President. However, the demands of the presidency of this organization are such, with respect to the amount of time which must be given, that Don might very well have trouble over the long range doing some of the things in the amount of time that I have done. He and I have talked about this, but we have worked as a team and I would hope that Don was nominated and elected again as Vice President. But I think that you should consider, as Don and I and others in the organization have done, the long-range succession in this organization. All of this is by way of saying one more thing to you. I've not seen as many of you at this Convention as I would have liked to have seen. Partly I have taken some time that I might not have taken before, shortened the work hours a little. I would hope to be up to being in the reception line tonight. But if it should be that that is not practical, I hope that you will understand. I think beyond that I would say to you one more thing. We must consider the growing and evolving nature of this organization. The organization has grown from the day it was small to the day when it's large. It has grown from the time when it was weak to a period of strength. It has grown from the loose confederacy to a tight-knit, hard-hitting movement. It has, in other words, truly become a National Federation of the Blind. It is the dream that Dr. tenBroek, and those other pioneers, launched in 1940.

It is appropriate that we should come back here to California and here to Los Angeles in this year of our biggest Convention, since in 1967, the last time we had a Convention here, it was the last Convention at which Dr. tenBroek presided.

"Sometimes we get, in the National Office, various letters and, as you know, I share them with you from time to time. I want to share with you a part of one letter as I bring this Presidential Report to a conclusion. Somebody wrote to me and said: 'There are many who would aspire to lead, not only in our state but I would expect in every state in the Union. NFB is only as strong as its local chapters. Is there not a way possible whereby leaders could be trained? Could the NFB set up regular yearly seminars to teach new officers both at the state and local levels in the fine art of competent leadership? Perhaps courses could be written and directed in each state by local people who already know the ropes and by using the prepared materials training newly elected officers both in state and chapter offices in how to form and support movements so that problems such as we face here without tried-by-fire leadership available, we would know what to do so that we could move quickly and expertly, with confidence and intelligence, to present our problems to the media in such a way which would convince them we were not just silly, whimpering, poor handicapped folk who want some sort of attention. It's all well and good to say write your Congressman or talk with your local legislators, but if you present yourself with fear and trembling because you try to stammer your way through facts which you know but are unpracticed at speaking before committees or even are unaccustomed to meeting one Congressman in his office, you can't hope to win the day with him. Why not set up

informal seminars or classes which simulate what members will face when they pick up the placard, meet the media, confront the state or Federal governments on their ball fields, sincere but unpracticed NFBers can appear confident and self-assured. Also I feel that brush-up lessons in rules of parliament, on how to run a smooth, well-organized meeting, would be helpful. Good leadership at the head is important; knowledgeable leadership at the succeeding lower levels is imperative if the machine is to run years after the old leadership has handed over the controls to the next generation.'

"Okay. That letter has some merit. Let me point out to you some of the things that I said in response. I said: 'I want to deal with your comments about the training of state and local leaders. Yes, of course, we should have extensive seminars for all new state and local officers. But who is to do the work? Who is to plan and finance and lead them? During the last three years I have personally conducted five leadership seminars, each lasting almost four days. They were held at holiday times when I might have been relaxing. They lasted from early morning until late at night. In all, more than one hundred people were involved, including, among others, several people from your state.' (This, incidentally, happened to be a woman from Ohio that I'm writing to so I'll put in the names.) 'Robert Eschbach, Pat Eschbach, Barbara Pierce, Mary Ellen Reihing were there. Hopefully the people in these seminars will go back to their individual states and do the same thing at the local level. The results are bound to be uneven. I know that Ohio has profited and is stronger now than it formerly was. It cannot be emphasized too often or too strongly that we are a people's movement. When the day comes when all of our members are well-educated, well-

motivated, intelligent, fully informed, articulate, and harmonious there will probably no longer be a need for the Federation. We are struggling to understand and become and we will inevitably lose battles and have problems of faith and understanding. This is the very reason why we must persevere. You tell me that you are a member of the Federation. You obviously have access to the *Monitor* and are articulate. Why, then, do you need to ask me what there is that you can do to help the movement. I am a member just as you are. There is no more reason why I should help you in Cincinnati than that you should help me in Iowa or that we should both help some local affiliate in Idaho. I work as long and as hard and as devotedly as I know how and I shall keep doing it. I hope that you are doing likewise. If you are truly doing the best you can, I should not criticize you but should try to be helpful and supportive. You have the same responsibilities toward me and toward your state leaders. If any of the people holding elective office are not leading as they should, you have the responsibility of trying to find somebody who can do better. Or, perhaps, you have the responsibility to run yourself. In the meantime, you have the responsibility to support the leadership and strengthen the movement that we have.' [Applause.]

"As I have said, I think this has been by far our best year. I have no reason to suppose that next year will not be a better year or the next after that a still better year. It will certainly be so if you and I and the members of this organization make it so. It will certainly not be so if we do not make it so. It is up to us. I have faith in what we as a movement and we as a people can do and, therefore, I think it will be better. That concludes the Presidential Report." [Prolonged applause.]

During the afternoon, President Jernigan noted that July 6 was the anniversary of Professor tenBroek's birthday and asked the Convention to join him in a moment of silent meditation. Then a commemorative resolution [76-36] was read and adopted.

### Affirmative Action

The next item for general discussion was Affirmative Action and Equal Rights for the Blind. Implementation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was the portion of Martin Gerry, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. John Read, Assistant Secretary, Employment Standards Administration, United States Department of Labor, took on implementation of Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Harold Krents, legal counsel for Mainstream, Incorporated, explained that the purpose of his organization was to aid government and private organizations and other groups in the implementation of these important civil rights acts for the handicapped.

The sections under discussion read:

#### EMPLOYMENT UNDER FEDERAL CONTRACTS

**Section 503.** (a) Any contract in excess of \$2,500 entered into by any Federal department or agency for the procurement of personal property and nonpersonal services (including construction) for the United States shall contain a provision requiring that, in employing persons to carry out such contract the party contracting with the United States shall take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified handicapped individuals as defined in section 7(6). The provisions of this section shall apply to any subcontract in excess of \$2,500 entered into by a prime contractor in carrying out any contract for the procurement of personal property and nonpersonal services (including

construction) for the United States. The President shall implement the provisions of this section by promulgating regulations within ninety days after the date of enactment of this section.

(b) If any handicapped individual believes any contractor has failed or refuses to comply with the provisions of his contract with the United States, relating to employment of handicapped individuals, such individual may file a complaint with the Department of Labor. The Department shall promptly investigate such complaint and shall take such action thereon as the facts and circumstances warrant, consistent with the terms of such contract and the laws and regulations applicable thereto.

(c) The requirements of this section may be waived, in whole or in part, by the President with respect to a particular contract or subcontract, in accordance with guidelines set forth in regulations which he shall prescribe, when he determines that special circumstances in the national interest so require and states in writing his reasons for such determination.

#### NONDISCRIMINATION UNDER FEDERAL GRANTS

**Section 504.** No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States, as defined in section 7(6), shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

[Approved September 26, 1973;  
Public Law 93-112.]

Since admission to educational institutions becomes involved, it is well to recall the words of Section 904 of P.L. 92-318, adopted in 1973:

**Section 904.** No person in the United States shall, on the ground of blindness or severely impaired vision, be denied admission

in any course of study by a recipient of Federal financial assistance for any educational program or activity, but nothing herein shall be construed to require any such institution to provide any special services to any person because of his blindness or visual impairment.

There is problem enough in interpreting statutes which alter the status quo, as these laws do. But statutes are implemented through regulations issued by the Federal Executive department assigned the task. And in the case of these civil and equal rights laws, implementation was assigned to the wrong department for the wrong reasons; that is, they fell to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and not to the Department of Justice. Why? Because the handicapped are considered a different kind of minority with special problems and not ordinary citizens at all. This fact is especially noteworthy when one considers that women and minorities, who are included in some areas administered by the Civil Rights Office of the Department of HEW are written into the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which gives them constitutional protections not available to the handicapped. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare established its own Civil Rights Office. In May of 1976 it issued a long series of proposed regulations and attached thereto a very controversial "Costs, Benefits, and Inflationary Impact" statement on implementing these statutes. The statement was prepared by the Public Research Institute which is a division of the Center of Naval Analyses. The latter group seems to have launched a ship in the desert of the handicapped with the results one might have expected.

The proposed regulations contained an invitation to interested parties requesting their comments. The National Federation



of the Blind accepted that invitation and James Gashel and Ted Young submitted. on the organization's behalf, a fifteen-page analysis of the basic premises and suggested remedies for the faults contained therein. It was around this analysis that the discussion at the Convention centered. Mr. Gerry spent most of his allotted time telling us what was not intended by the statements in the proposed regulations and assuring us that many of the points made by the National Federation in its June 14, 1976, letter would be considered for inclusion in the final Regulations to be promulgated.

Mr. Read, whose major responsibility is implementing Section 503, gave an overview of how his department is dealing with specific problems. He reported that as of May, 1969 complaints had been received under Section 503; that 526 are now closed. He noted that 107 have been from visually handicapped persons. If the Department of Labor really believes the words spoken to us by Mr. Read, then we may expect some positive results:

"Now, let me say a word about why this program is so important to the Department of Labor, and to us in the Government. The Department, as some of you may know, is interested in the welfare of working men and women. We have programs that go to training, go to safety and health, protection of pension rights, conduct of labor relations. We in ESA have a special interest in wages, hours, discrimination based on age and sex. We are interested and concerned not because minorities, women, handicapped, or veterans for that matter, require some special rights to a job. Their rights and your rights are the same as anyone else's. And the responsibility of employers to provide equal access to jobs is the same across the board. These rights and

responsibilities exist and the program was established for the same ultimate purpose in my view, and that is to assure that our country and our economy enjoy the benefits of productive labor from all those who seek to enter the work force. And if a certain blindness afflicts some of our employers concerning the virtually untapped resources among the handicapped, then it is our job to gently but firmly convince them that they and the economy are the ultimate beneficiaries of the program. My sense is that you understand this better than we in the Government just as on a personal level you understand better than we and much more clearly, the extent of and the divisiveness of discrimination now and the need for affirmative action.

"Handicapped men and women deserve and must be given the chance to excel at a job. We in the Employment Standards Administration are seeking to provide the opportunity through jobs with Federal contractors. Affirmative action to hire and promote the handicapped will come about through education of employers and members of the work force across the country about their rights and their responsibilities and by vigorous and responsible enforcement when necessary. We are confident that Federal contractors who do not now recognize handicapped men and women as valuable and productive members of the work force will come to welcome them when, with the assistance of this program, their talents and abilities are demonstrated on the job."

These statutes and their implementing regulations have had a tremendous impact on the lives of the handicapped and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. The Federation will carefully scrutinize administration of these programs to see



that the rights of the blind are protected. Because of the importance of the laws and the regulations, more detailed discussions of these matters can be expected to appear in the *Monitor*.

President Jernigan put the key question: "Would your office be willing to think about or consider helping us try to get under title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964? As you say, you are not going to implement Section 904 because it is already covered, and perhaps even better, under Section 504. Why not go on and put that also under title VI? If the one follows, so would the other." This comment was greeted with vigorous applause from the audience but seemed to puzzle Mr. Gerry. He was pressed on the point of the separate and unequal character of the provisions in the proposed regulations. Mr. Gerry then tossed the ball back to the Congress, saying that the law and the regulations would need to be changed but that he did not see much hope that they either would or could be so altered.

Other questions were put to the panelists. The replies were rather tentative, and, in some instances, required reporting developments to the NFB President, so they will not be pursued here.

Resolutions 76-9, 76-10, and 76-11, which deal directly with these matters, were read and adopted by the Convention.

The Convention then eagerly awaited the presentation by Dr. Jacob Freid, Executive Director of the Jewish Braille Institute of America and member of the NFB Board of Directors. The assembly was not disappointed. Dr. Freid delivered a witty and provocative address entitled "The Blind Do Lead the Blind," which will appear in

full in the October issue of *The Braille Monitor*.

Tuesday was topped off in fine style by a lovely reception, followed by a dance. For hours the crowds pressed forward to be greeted by President and Mrs. Jernigan, First Vice President and Mrs. Donald C. Capps, Second Vice President and Mrs. Ralph Sanders, Secretary Lawrence Marcelino, Treasurer and Mrs. Richard Edlund, all members of the Executive Committee and their spouses, Board Members, staff of the Federation, and of course, leaders of the host affiliate—the NFB of California. The merriment and dancing to a big band, "The Casual Aires," went on most of the night. By nine o'clock, however, those who were on the Nominating Committee were hard at work.

### Wednesday, July 7

The invocation was given by Mrs. Junerose Killian, president of the Southeastern Chapter of the NFB of Connecticut. In the fall she will become a student at the Yale Divinity School, the first blind woman to do so. The President evoked an appropriate response from the Convention when he noted that this day marked the nineteenth wedding anniversary of those staunch Federationists now residing in Florida, Sam and Gertrude Sitt.

### Elections

The first item of business was the election of officers. Anthony G. Mannino, chairman of the Nominations Committee, gave his report, which was unanimously accepted by the Convention. There was a lively contest for one board seat; all others were by acclamation. The results were: President, Dr. Kenneth Jenigan; First Vice President,

Donald C. Capps; Second Vice President, Ralph Sanders; Secretary, Lawrence Marcelino; Treasurer, Richard Edlund; Executive Committeepersons Joyce Scanlan, Robert Eschbach, Beth Bowen, and Rami Rabby. Dr. Grant, Dr. Freid, and Mr. Maurer were reelected to the Board of Directors unanimously.

James Gashel's Report from Washington was allotted only a short twenty minutes since we were already running behind on the agenda. Because of the importance of this report, it will appear in full in the October issue of the *Monitor*.

Arnold Ludwig, president of the Ludwig Candy Company, and Ed Wilkinson, sales representative, who not only supply us with excellent candy for fundraising projects but who put part of their profits back into the Federation, talked to us about next year's money-raising efforts. Details can be obtained from our National Office in Des Moines for those affiliates and chapters who wish to sell these delicious and very saleable products.

The closing item on the Wednesday morning agenda was "The Right of the Blind to Organize: The National Labor Relations Board, Sheltered Workshops, and the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind," a panel discussion moderated by James Omvig. Participating on the panel were Edward A. Disch, representative, Communications Workers of America; Rami Rabby, wage and salary administration consultant, Hewitt Associates; Dick Mohill, counselor, Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind.

Mr. Omvig's brief in the Chicago Lighthouse case was printed in the June 1976 issue of the *Monitor*. The National Labor Relations Board overturned the infamous

1961 San Diego decision which had declared sheltered shopworkers to be wards of the state. The decision in the Chicago Lighthouse case now makes it possible for all shopworkers to bargain collectively through union elections for the wage and working conditions which are the right of almost all workers in this country. This decision of the NLRB may lead to freedom from custodialism for sheltered shopworkers but it provides only the legal base from which to work. It will take a lot of hard and continued effort on the part of all the blind to bring the promise contained in this decision to a working reality. The report of that decision, the follow-up election and its implications will be reported in full in the October issue of the *Monitor*.

Wednesday afternoon is euphemistically called "free." With the dozens of conferences scheduled with the President, meetings of some groups not able to be accommodated at any other time, the many exhibits to be seen, the tours to famous Southern California attractions, the afternoon and evening were very full, indeed.

#### Thursday, July 8

There was no formal invocation on Thursday morning and the members engaged in silent devotions.

Thursday was filled with exciting discussions and papers, with anticipation of the banquet in the evening adding to the high spirit.

Supplemental Security Income was the first topic on the agenda. Miss Pat Livers, very new Director of the Bureau of SSI, spoke from her experience as Administrator of the Regional Office VII, headquartered in Kansas City, as well as from a

brief stay in her new office. Since her time with the Convention was limited, she deferred to Robert L. Trachtenberg, Director of Hearings and Appeals and Chairman of the Appeals Council in the Social Security Administration. Mr. Trachtenberg explained in detail the workings of his Bureau and, because it may be helpful to members in their own dealings with the Social Security Administration, his remarks will appear in full in the October issue of the *Monitor*.

### White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals

Jack Smith, Executive Director of the White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals, talked to us most informally about the coming gathering and the part we might play and solicited our support and participation. He may have been surprised at some of the questions and some of the reports he heard at the close of his remarks. It went like this:

President JERNIGAN. The White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals offers a good deal of promise and also could offer a good deal of peril to blind people, depending on how that conference is conducted and what comes out of it. Undoubtedly some attention will be paid to the deliberations of that conference. I told you that this organization was recognized by having its President appointed by Mr. Jack Smith as a special consultant to the committee. That was done recently. [Applause.] Mr. Smith is here with us today and will talk to us about the White House Conference and then we'll take questions from the audience, or some of them. Mr. Smith, we're glad to have you with us. [Applause.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President and honored guests, I am a

representative of the White House here today, and I want to say that I understand that earlier this week your President was reelected. I would like to take some hints back and find out for President Ford what his techniques are. [Laughter.] I want to tell you that when I was a youngster I used to attend many revival services and I want to tell you that the electricity that I feel in this room is absolutely unparalleled. [Cheers and applause.] You know, young people today talk in terms of happenings. What they are referring to, of course, is rock concerts. But in the area of the handicapped, no Convention by reputation can be compared to the National Federation of the Blind. [Cheers and applause.] And I can tell you, although I've been invited all over the country to speak, that I have not looked forward to any convention more than I have this one. [Applause.] Frankly, at some time someone is going to say that I have spoken to other groups, even groups that purport to speak on behalf of the blind, and I ask you this one favor: remember that even the Prodigal Son was forgiven his transgressions. [Laughter.]

I am really pleased to be invited to speak about the White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals and I know that you don't want to sit here this morning and listen to governmental rhetoric. I know, if my past readings of your past Conventions are any indication, you don't tolerate verbal garbage. [Applause.] Now, it used to be said that talk is cheap, and it is not. You only have to listen to some dialogue in Washington to know that talk is costing you and me millions of dollars in service every year. Some of you might say, "We don't know this Smith fellow," and it's true, you don't. For all you know I might have been some man in a wheelchair who happened to roll off one of those damned

curb cuts and get caught in the Convention traffic. In all seriousness, I do wish I could sit beside each of you and have you somehow sense what's really inside my heart about this White House Conference.

Little did I realize one year ago today, that I would have the awesome responsibility of directing a White House Conference. As you know it was designed through Public Law 93-516 with the following mission: to provide a national assessment of the problems and potentials of individuals with mental and physical handicaps; to generate a national awareness of those problems and potentials for better than thirty-five million Americans; and then to make recommendations to the President and Congress that will enable individuals with handicaps to live their lives with greater independence, dignity, and full participation in community life. You know, we could have developed a comprehensive national assessment for blind persons alone. I don't think we've fully exhausted the dedicated efforts and attention that's going to be required to solve the problems of those who are blind. I don't want you to get any ideas now, we're not going to change the whole conference, but as many of you know, between July and December there will be conferences in every state and territory leading to a White House Conference in May of 1977. I can assure you this: the needs of blind people will be recognized in every aspect of the conference. Since the agenda for the conference will come from issues and those recommendations coming from states, we're urging every group to become actively involved. And certainly we want the National Federation to influence the recommendations coming out of those states and we're challenging you to get involved and also we're willing to provide you any assistance if you're having trouble with your state

directors. You know, as Muzzy Marcelino would say, about that final report, "It ain't going to be nothing but a pretty book, is it?" You know, I kid Muzzy, but after reading some of his questions from last year's Convention, I thought it would be very prudent to throw his name into the speech [laughter] so I would at least be prepared for him after my remarks.

I think that what should separate this White House Conference from any others is our requirement to produce an implementation plan. In the final analysis it will be the assurances that the conference recommendations will be executed that will be the true measure of this White House Conference. Now the history of the National Federation of the Blind is a living example that things do not happen by chance. I can assure you that the White House Conference will not take any chances on the implementation of critical aspects of the conference.

I'm proud to have Ken Jernigan serve with the conference as consultant. [Applause.] I think the conference deserves a round of applause for being astute enough to call upon one of this Nation's finest leaders. [Applause.] Now I don't want you to miss the subtlety of what I said there because I didn't say handicapped leaders and I didn't say blind leaders, because individuals like Ken Jernigan, and Jim Gashel on my left here, are outstanding individuals who happen to be blind. [Applause.] There are many areas where your organization and the White House Conference are very similar and I am going to explain a few of those to you.

The White House Conference is organized into five major concern areas—health, education, social, special, and economic. We have topics under each of those. In the area



of social concerns, for example, there are attitudes of the general public toward the handicapped. No area has a more profound effect upon the individuals who are blind than attitudes that separate man from man. And if our attitudinal studies are any indication, the blind receive a major brunt of discrimination that exists in the area of employment. [Applause.] As your former President, Jacobus tenBroek, said in his 1960 speech, the blind must have and justly deserve social and economic mobility. And I think, by example, there is no group of individuals who happen to be called handicapped but who have demonstrated, through success, greater intellectual capacity. The blind, as other handicapped individuals, should not be denied access to jobs or training for jobs solely on the basis of handicap. And at some point, this country's leaders must realize that the blind can handle more in business and industry than simply vending operations. [Applause.] As a point of information, the Small Business Administration had \$95 million available last year for new business enterprises and I can't tell you out of that amount what a small percentage was ever executed and taken up by handicapped individuals. You know, it is not surprising that most of us do not know about opportunities. Counseling for the handicapped in the country is notoriously inadequate. [Applause.] Access to services is so dispersed and so confusing that the system has effectively designed methods for losing individuals such as you and me in the bureaucracy.

Civil rights is another critical focal point of the conference. Certainly NFB's leadership in this area is renowned as a model for effectiveness. We have many laws on our books and I think they have great potential for protecting the rights of the handicapped. But, sadly, many of the laws have loopholes

that minimize their effectiveness. Through the White House Conference we are going to find ways to impact and increase the impact of existing legislation. Now, one example is the affirmative action regulations: Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is really too early to tell whether these regulations will enhance the hiring of handicapped individuals. But I want to say this: When you don't build in a mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of legislation, which is the case of the affirmative action regulations, then I think the effort must be suspect. In the area of civil rights, and this is true of Section 504, the handicapped deserve the same protection under the law as every other American. [Applause.] I have been impressed by how the NFB is using its astute skill in lobbying and trying to have impact on Section 504.

The delivery of services in this country must be deliberately and thoroughly evaluated through the White House Conference. And as NFB can attest, existing agencies on both the state and Federal level are not very easy to change. But at some point we must be willing to eliminate ineffective existing programs and modify others if we're going to get the services we need and deserve. [Applause.]

And on a positive note, we must be willing to strengthen those programs that are delivering. Some people would have you believe that the panacea for solving all of our problems is a very simple one—simply lump all of the handicapped individuals and services under a great big umbrella. Now I don't pretend to suggest what the final recommendations of the White House Conference should be—frankly, that's not my role, nor should it be—but in some programs for the handicapped—and you can look from agency to agency—you rarely find

individuals who are fully sensitive to the needs of individuals who are blind. Believe me, it's the same for other disability groups. Now I ask you this: Could this suggest the need for a program that would provide coordinated services for the blind alone and another one for the deaf? I think it's up to you to influence those recommendations coming out of those state conferences.

There are alternatives for solving problems and enhancing the potential of handicapped individuals. We are, as you know, in an age full of criticism and cynicism. Individuals who know little or nothing about the White House Conference, its planning or programming, will always find a way to be negative. Of course, receiving criticism is nothing new to NFB. Where would the blind of this Nation be today if NFB hadn't protested for reform and stood firmly against those who would subject the blind to a role of dependence? [Applause.] I'm impressed how you discuss and debate an issue. When you take a stand, you are united. [Applause and cheers.] I have seen a lot of groups across this country, a lot of coalitions. They all could take lessons from you in this area. [Applause.] But I've talked to your leaders on more than one occasion, and they're right. It's time to stop talking about these problems and put our energies into solving them.

I am reminded about how former President John F. Kennedy felt about organizations such as NFB who organize and really speak on their own behalf. He said: "Through these organizations these citizens are able to formulate democratically, and voice effectively, their views on programs that our National Government and state governments are financing for their rehabilitation. It is important that these views be expressed

freely and without interference. It is important that these views be heard and considered by persons charged with the responsibility for determining and carrying out our programs for the blind."

President Kennedy, who was then a Senator, minced no words in specifying the threat with which the Federation and its affiliates were confronted. That was 1957 and the threat, of course, is less today. The National Federation of the Blind is a shining example of how vested interests, who would continue dependency for the blind and of the blind, can be changed to maximize both ability and capacity. What I am about to share with you now is very subtle. And I want to tell you that there are many groups that I have talked to that did not get this subtlety, but knowing your organization, I think you will. Society creates handicapped individuals, or at least the severity of disability. [Applause.] Now, while I don't deny that I'm handicapped by society's standards, I don't consider myself handicapped, and I think that, again, if you listen to the subtleties, that many of you will agree that many of you here today were not handicapped but inconvenienced. [Applause.] Now some of these inconveniences can be tolerated, but others cannot be tolerated and must be eliminated. [Applause.] This Nation—and you know it—has the potential to eliminate these inconveniences. We must influence the country to take up and be responsible for eliminating these inconveniences. We may have to help with the process but then what would you expect from the White House Conference, or for that matter, from the National Federation of the Blind. Ben Franklin once said, "When your time is up, you're finished." I'm finished.



President JERNIGAN. Let me make one comment to you. We have taken a very firm stand in this organization on behalf of special agencies, separate agencies for the blind. We feel that however good or however bad services are, we think they will be better under the separate agency for the blind than they will under the umbrella. [Applause and cheers.] This organization, more than fifty thousand strong and with some 2,500 people at this Convention, is closely knit, well-organized, and able to act in tremendous unity. Like a coiled spring, we are prepared to strike when we must. [Applause.] I would hope that you would do what you can to help us come out of the White House Conference with recommendations that would reflect the concern that services should be in separate agencies. You know of the Mallas study, and that study points up what all of us knew all the time; that is, that programs are better if you have a separate agency. You may or may not want to comment on that, but to demonstrate to you how this audience feels about that—

Mr. SMITH. May I say before you do that I perfectly agree with you in everything you said.

President JERNIGAN. Fine. [Applause.]

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E. U. PARKER. In Mississippi, the chairman asked only for Mississippi Council of the Blind members. The NFB was frozen out.

Mr. SMITH. You must call these things to our attention. We must give states flexibility in organization.

President JERNIGAN. Well, in any event, you have now had the matter called to

your attention by Mississippi and I assume that can be looked into. Let's go with the next question.

Mr. MARCELINO. Well, Mr. Smith—

Mr. SMITH. Yes, sir. [Laughter.]

Mr. MARCELINO. It's nice to know that someone in Washington finds my name someplace.

Mr. SMITH. With an Italian name like that, I couldn't do anything else. [Laughter.]

Mr. MARCELINO. But this one's Portuguese. [Much laughter.] These conferences, these reports, these decisions—the nitty-gritty decisions are not made from input that comes in from way down the line, way down the echelons. They're made at around-the-table discussions, back and forth, there's where the policy decisions are set forth that come out of such conferences and such vast arrays of people. The nitty-gritty decisions are made around those tables, not by someone sending in a written statement among fifty thousand others. So it is in California. The members of the planning commission for the White House Conference to be held here in California were appointed by the Department of Rehabilitation, who saw to it that the blind representatives came from a very miniscule company union or organization that purports to say "of the blind," and not from the largest organization of blind people in the State, namely, the National Federation of the Blind of California. It would seem that we were not appointed to that planning commission. I hope that you can do something to rectify that.

I hope that you will see that organizations of the disabled themselves will have a

major part in bringing forth to your conference what the needs and problems of the disabled are. Let the various disability groups participate in the internal planning and approach, not just the approach that someone who happens to be handicapped is going to speak for all disabilities. It just cannot be. [Applause and cheers.] We the organized blind of America and California do not purport to speak for other disability groups. We cannot. But we don't want other people speaking for us. [Applause and cheers.]

Now, another thing, Mr. Smith. I hope that this conference will address itself very seriously to the problems that the disabled have in dealing with Federal agencies. It is absolutely impossible to move the Social Security Administration into any changes. With all due respect to some of the people who are here from the Rehabilitation Services Administration, it still is very difficult to get those people to change their regulations, change their treatment, practices, and policies toward the disabled. Some way must be found for meeting the needs of the disabled. I think that it looks as though the best way to do it is to take it all away from the Federal Government and give it back to the states. [Applause.]

Mr. SMITH. In a general response, I will talk to John Hessler in California. The conference is looking into service delivery systems. We will have a seminar on coordination of Federal programs and I certainly hope that your President would serve in that think-tank seminar that we will hold. As far as the conference itself is concerned, it is a consumer conference and I can tell you this—and this is a critical point—fifty percent of the delegates to the White House Conference will be handicapped individuals, twenty-five percent parents, and the other

twenty-five percent will be comprised, frankly, of business, industry, labor, and provider organizations. So I think that you can see that consumers will be represented by seventy-five percent of the voting delegates of the White House Conference itself. I can assure you of this: We are going to look to the delegates who come in from the states. We have asked that they either be elected by the state conference or named by a panel that includes at least fifty percent handicapped individuals. If NFB is not adequately represented from those delegations, I guarantee you that we have the process in place to provide delegates at large to rectify that situation. [Applause.]

President JERNIGAN. All right. For a moment there I thought you were going to fall into the error and the sin that the NAC people fall into, and that sin is this: You know, we fought a war in this country in 1776 over what was called "virtual representation." And that is, the British Parliament said, "Why, what do you mean, taxation without representation? You've got lawyers in the colonies, we've got layers in Parliament. You've got farmers in the colonies, we've got farmers in the Parliament. They can speak for you. That's your class." So some people say, "Well, we've got consumers in these conferences. We've got blind persons there. Look at them. You can count them." Yes, that's right. But there's a difference between being a consumer and a consumer representative. The only person that can represent consumers is elected by consumers. [Cheers and applause.] And in 1776 we fought the British about it, and in 1976 we're fighting NAC about it. [Laughter, cheers, applause.]

Mr. SMITH. Well, Mr. President, I've done my homework with respect to your past conferences and I have read that on occasion

there have been individuals who have come up here and spoken before your Convention and the members heard some very highfalutin promises in terms of delivery, in terms of action. I want you to watch this White House Conference very carefully, because I'm going to be able to come back to you in one year and I want you to be able to evaluate what I've said to you today in terms of action. [Cheers and applause.]

President JERNIGAN. Verily! Verily! [Laughter.]

STERLING FRANCE. In New York State, we were told that there would be an advisory committee to the Governor on the conference. The next thing we knew, the committee was formed, the members of which are all heads of agencies in New York State. Next we were told that a committee to organize the conference in the State would be chosen and they asked for names. Two days later we get a list of twenty persons who were on that committee on which there is no member of the NFB. We were also told by the co-chairman that he knew nothing about the handicapped and he was only told to organize this thing and organize it in a hurry. It's impossible for the White House Conference to come out with meaningful programs, recommendations, et cetera, if throughout the Union these State conferences appear to be one thing to the public, and those persons who wish to be involved recognize that they are another. I would recommend that you and your staff look closely into each state conference to see how it is run, what is coming out of it. I don't think the NFB will tolerate the sham coming from the White House. [Applause.]

RAY HALVERSON. One of the problems that we've had in Idaho in getting ready for

the conference is that most of the Mayor's Committee on the Employment of the Handicapped has been used. Those committees are typically filled with representatives from business and industry and agencies rather than representatives from organizations. Now as that moves on, the delegates will be going to the state convention. This White House Conference will carry with it a good deal of prestige and it's going to come out with recommendations and we'll be dealing with the issue that it is going to come out with consensus programs. Will there be a possibility, with the structure set up now, of a minority report which will carry equal weight. The reason being that if you get into a consensus-type opinion it will be assumed that everybody involved generally agreed and that would not permit for differing views such as not going along with the general consensus. Will there be provision for an official minority report sanctioned by the conference?

Mr. SMITH. There will be an opportunity to write minority reports. However, there is always the question of whether a minority report carries the same weight in the eyes and ears of the beholder in terms of weight overall. I will say also that this conference will have a voting mechanism where we will be able to break down the vote in terms of specific characteristics. I think that will also tell us a lot about where the problem really lies and also how to proceed.

ANDY VIRDEN. We've gone through our first round of conferences in Minnesota and our State president, Joyce Scanlan, was elected a delegate and I was elected an alternate. But I have one big concern: You speak highly of separate agencies for blind people and for deaf people. That's fine and we fully concur. However, a survey in conjunction with our conference was taken

and this survey was so negatively skewed that I am afraid that the survey is going to show that most handicapped people want an umbrella agency. Could there be questions included in future surveys? And also, would we be given some opportunity—really an opportunity, not just philosophically—to express our desire for separate agencies for the blind?

Mr. SMITH. I think that is a possibility. I think that we are going to have to do a job—and we can control this more at the national level—of educating those delegates to the real facts of life and I think that is something we are going to have to do particularly in this area, and frankly, in many others. There is not the same kind of sophistication, I'm afraid, that this group has shown in terms of problems and their solutions.

#### Client Assistance Programs

Client Assistance Programs: Their Impact on the Blind was the subject of an address by Luis A. Escontrias, Executive Director of California's Client Assistance Program. This new program, a pilot project authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, is important to all those who are clients or who may become clients of the department of rehabilitation in their states. The speech is produced elsewhere in this issue not only for its own merit but also because it has a bearing on some other discussions that took place later in the day, as indicated by President Jernigan's introduction of Mr. Escontrias:

"When I asked Mr. Escontrias to appear on the program, things were different from what they are today. Since that time developments occurred of such a nature that the National Office of the Federation, acting

through the presidency, sent this mailgram to Mario Obledo, who is Secretary of the Health and Welfare agency in California, on June 16, 1976:

"The organized blind of the Nation view with increasing alarm developments in the California Department of Rehabilitation. It is our understanding that the Department is being operated by its Director, Mr. Ed Roberts, in a political rather than a professional manner and that, as an example, he has now dismissed Mr. Luis Escontrias, who has ably served as head of the Client Assistance Program. If reports of this and other acts of politics in the program are true, the implications for the entire rehabilitation program of the Nation are serious, indeed. If violations of the Federal Rehabilitation Act have occurred, California's Federal funding may be jeopardized. The Congress, the Federal Executive Branch, the media, and the disabled population of the Nation could not passively witness such developments. I officially bring these matters to your attention, hoping that action on your part can avert what threatens to become disaster. Perhaps Mr. Roberts does not have the perspective to see all aspects of the situation."

"Now, at the same time, people in this State, members of the organized blind movement and other disabled groups, took action, and so did Jim Gashel, who, as Washington Representative of the NFB, contacted Federal officials. For whatever reason, whether fate or destiny, Mr. Escontrias was reinstated by Mr. Obledo. [Loud cheers and applause.] I now present to you the one and still head of the Client Assistance Program in California, Luis Escontrias."

The Convention was so moved by the closing sentences of Mr. Escontrias' address

that there was a spontaneous burst of singing "Glory, Glory, Federation."

Federationist Harold Snider, Coordinator of Programs for the Handicapped at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., reported on his work in making those wonderful national museums accessible to the blind. It was refreshing to hear from a Federationist using Federation philosophy and materials to educate the staff with which he works at the Smithsonian about the real world of the blind. His address appears elsewhere in this issue.

#### **Rehabilitation and Its Implications for the Blind**

The main focus of the afternoon session was on Rehabilitation and Its Implications for the Blind: Where, Why, How?

Dr. Andrew S. Adams, Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration, Office of Human Development, reported on Progress on Rehabilitation of the Severely Disabled. This good friend of all the disabled was greeted most warmly by the Convention. In introducing him, President Jernigan said:

President JERNIGAN. As you know, the Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration first came to our Convention in Chicago. He came with some wonderment, I guess, as to what kind of an outfit we were, and we wondered what kind of an outfit he was. We both wondered. I believe he liked what he found with us and we liked what we found with him, and since that time he has been an ally and a friend. It is not that he has been in any way partisan in the sense that he has done for us what he would not do for any group. It is that he has been willing, as a Federal official,

to listen to the organized blind, to hear what citizens have had to say, and to work with representatives of consumers. This, of course, is the test of a real statesman in a governmental program. And I think the reason that we have enjoyed so very much working with him is that we find it refreshingly different for a Federal official, or for that matter, a state official, to be willing to sit down with people and hear what they've got to say and then not simply to make double-talk answers but to go and do something about it. Dr. Adams is back with us this time—I just learned a while ago that this day, this very day, is Dr. Adams' birthday. [Applause.] Let me ask the singers to come up here. Before I put him on to talk, I want you to make it ring so that it is heard in Washington. Let's show this guy what we think of him. Here's to Dr. Adams. [Prolonged applause and cheers. Happy Birthday is sung.]

Dr. ADAMS. Dr. Jernigan, honored guests, true friends. [Applause.] It is just great to be with all of you for the third consecutive NFB Convention, and I look forward to being with you in the years ahead. [Applause.] Our relationship, the cooperation between the Office of the Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration and the National Federation of the Blind continues to get stronger and stronger. Together we can best serve and accelerate the rights of all blind Americans and all handicapped citizens. In addition to its being just wonderful to have you so enthusiastic about an aging man's birthday, which I deeply appreciate, I am also extremely pleased to join with you in this 200th year of our Nation. We have come a long way, but we still have a way to go before the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are completely accessible to those classified as the handicapped of our Nation. I



say classified because so many of you have proven time and time again that you are not handicapped in the things you want to do. [Applause.] Yes, and I know the National Federation of the Blind has been and will continue to be in the forefront, leading out toward the goal of full and complete exercise of the privileges and obligations of first-class citizenship by all Americans. I know of no other group fighting for the equitable rights of all people that is stronger and not afraid to show it, than the National Federation of the Blind. I want to say at the outset that, to my knowledge, this gathering represents the largest group of blind persons and providers of services to the blind which has ever come together in any one place. [Applause.] As Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration, I congratulate you as an organization, and I congratulate your leadership under the superb direction of your good President, Dr. Kenneth Jernigan. [Applause.]

There are so many laudable things to say about Ken Jernigan, that it would take up my allotted time to do the job. I think you'll understand if I simply say that I respect, appreciate his counsel to me and his leadership in the field of rehabilitation more that I can possibly express. [Applause.] I only touch the surface when I cite that Dr. Jernigan has built the Federation to an organization of the disabled second to none. That as your voice, when he speaks he commands the utmost respect, as when spoke to the national leaders at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., last year. When he writes, his words go deep into the mind and to the heart. And when he administers a program for the blind, the blind are fully served by the best. I suggest you review, if you haven't already, the last annual report of the Iowa State

Commission for the Blind that Dr. Jernigan directs. [Applause.] Your President is a great leader. Your President is a great person. Your President is a good friend. In my books he is in the hall of fame for the blind and for all the disabled of America and the world. [Applause.] When I visited India last year, the National Federation of the Blind affiliate in New Delhi honored me with lunch and drafted a resolution thanking Dr. Jernigan for his world leadership, which I was proud to bring back and deliver to your President. [Applause.] I was very pleased to just learn that the National Federation of the Blind has been invited to join with the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped in recognition of the outstanding leadership and outstanding contributions on behalf of the physically disabled of our great Nation by Dr. Kenneth Jernigan and the aggressive membership of the Federation. [Applause.]

[Dr. Adams reads from the telegram reproduced in full below.] Those compliments that I just read are direct quotes by Harold Russell, Chairman of the President's Committee. I commend Dr. Jernigan and your membership for this worthy recognition and affiliation. I am sure the union will benefit the Nation's handicapped. Last year, as you will recall, I presented Dr. Jernigan with the Commissioner's Award, the highest award I can give for the Rehabilitation Services Administration. So for this year I am only able to present Dr. Jernigan with a token of friendship and purpose, a morning coffee mug. It is a bright yellow mug, with an inscription of a hobo of the 1930's. The inscription reads: "Man, there's a jungle out there." [Laughter and applause.] Even though you've accomplished much, Dr. Jernigan, you and I know there is still a jungle of inequality, biases, and barriers out there and we still have much work ahead.

Dr. Jernigan, I humbly give you this cup made by the handicapped people at the West Virginia Rehabilitation Center to help keep your targets in focus. Thank you for accepting this token. [Applause.]

President JERNIGAN. Thank you very much.

Dr. ADAMS. Now, today, I want to mention a few things about another good friend of all of us. This man has demonstrated his ability and energy to you for some time. I work with him frequently and I know that the recent achievements of the blind in Federal legislation in Federal programs for the blind are due substantially to his untiring and competent efforts. I am, as you know, speaking of James Gashel. I am asking at this time that Jim join me at the microphone please. [Dr. Adams read a review of James Gashel's academic and professional history and progress.] In January 1974, Jim and Arlene Gashel assumed their duties in the Washington Office of the National Federation of the Blind. Jim serves as Chief of the Washington Office of NFB. Arlene also works as a National Representative for the Federation. Jim acknowledges that this is a challenging and difficult post, but he also says that there is a great deal of reward in serving blind persons throughout the United States. It is my honor and my privilege to present to you, Jim Gashel, the highest award I can bestow, the Commissioner's Award for the Rehabilitation Services Administration, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare—an award which reads: "James Gashel hereby awarded this certificate for national contributions to the improvement of programs for blind Americans as the Washington Representative for the National Federation of the Blind." My congratulations, Jim. [Applause.]

Mr. GASHEL. Dr. Adams, Dr. Jernigan, fellow Federationists, thank you so much. Commissioner, what can I say, except to say that most especially we appreciate you. Thank you so much. [Applause.]

Dr. ADAMS. Thank you, Jim, and I am not sorry he didn't say much because I would rather he would save it all for Washington.

I would like to now give some remarks in terms of where we are in the rehabilitation of the severely handicapped. My first point in reporting on progress is to cite your progress and the impact it has had on the entire field of rehabilitation. I am convinced that the involvement of disabled consumers in the policies and programs affecting them is of the highest priority. I am willing to listen to consumers and I am willing to follow up on their views, including their complaints. Like me, most of you are or have been consumers. While we mostly respect and appreciate the efforts by various service agencies and departments, we know in terms of our own lives a great deal about the kinds of services we need. The progress we make in the field of rehabilitation of the severely disabled is in part directly related to the progress we make in consumer involvement. Consumerism is a movement whose time has come and you are leading the way for the many others with different disabilities. I believe in the movement because I believe it is the way our democracy was intended to work and because it conveys a sense of urgency for the country as well as provides dignity for all the disabled who are involved. A second point I want to make is that in RSA we have made some specific progress for the blind. For example, we, along with the Bureau for the Education of the Handicapped, and the Veterans' Administration, and the National

Federation of the Blind, are investing in an evaluation of the Kurzweil reading machine. [Applause.] This was the only new research project in RSA for which an exception was made to fund before completion and approval of an elaborate research evaluation strategy. We did this because it was at the top of my priority list.

Let me provide a status report on the Randolph-Sheppard program. Today there are 3,810 blind men and women operating their own small businesses in Federal, state, and local government buildings as well as in private industry—a direct result of this forty-year-old Act. The vending operations sell a wide variety of items. There are 1,004 vending facilities located on Federal properties and 2,806 located on non-Federal properties such as state offices and local courthouses. There are 155 stands located on privately owned property such as industrial plants. Last year the average earnings of federally sponsored blind vendors amounted to \$8,796, an increase of 8.9% over 1974. The gross sales which generated these earnings for the blind amounted to approximately \$155 million. Of course, tremendous credit goes to people like Senator Jennings Randolph who have and who are opening these important doors. But the truly great credit does to the blind of our country who are making it work. But it is only the beginning of the Randolph-Sheppard Program and the final stages of the new Randolph-Sheppard Regulations. I am insisting that they be responsive to the blind vendor. [Applause.] I have received excellent advice from the National Federation of the Blind and I can assure you that the concerns of the blind—your concerns—will be foremost. Again, the advice of your Federation is invaluable and deeply appreciated. Together we will get the best product. [Applause.]

When I first attended a national Convention of NFB, in 1974, RSA did not even have an Office for the Blind and Visually Handicapped at the Commissioner's level. In 1975 I was able to report that I had raised the importance and visibility of blind programs by the establishment of it as a staff office with a director reporting to me. [Applause.] I am now able to report to you that I have approved and submitted for departmental endorsement, the escalation of the Office for the Blind to a full-fledged line operation, headed by an assistant commissioner reporting directly to me. Departmental endorsement is expected any day. [Applause.] In addition, I have named one of my directors to regional rehabilitation services, Steve Cornett in the Atlanta Office, to represent all the regions in important activities for the blind. And still further, I have designated a definite person in each of the ten regions to coordinate programs for the blind. And even more, I have approved and submitted to the Department an increase of staff in Washington and the regions for our blind programs. [Applause.]

A third major point is that we are not only on the move in serving the blind of this country, but we are also moving out vigorously to serve other severely disabled citizens. When I took office a little over two years ago, 30% of the handicapped we were rehabilitating across the country were severely handicapped. Today we are rehabilitating 39% severely disabled, an increase in just two years of 9%. [Applause.] Yes, we are getting jobs for people who, yesterday, were considered unemployable. We are finding new ways of rehabilitating those with severe disabilities. We are providing rehabilitation services to 1,800,000 handicapped people a year. We are researching demonstrating rehabilitation of the very severely disabled, those who previously had

been written off and pushed aside. My current goals call for a vigorous outreach and recruitment effort so that all the disabled who need it get rehabilitation services. Job training programs which provide a variety of job opportunities at all occupational levels including the very highest. Full medical and related social services and employment services that help the handicapped secure jobs equal to the highest skills and abilities with follow-up for career advancement. You can assume that I am determined that the handicapped of our great Nation receive the kind of rehabilitation services they fully need and deserve.

A final point that I would like to make is that making progress in the rehabilitation of the severely disabled is preceded by a clear and solid definition of progress. I am not persuaded that progress for the disabled is more sympathy or handouts. I am not persuaded that progress is the grudgingly conceded crumbs from the table of society. Rather, progress is when you and I—the blind, the physically handicapped, and all other handicapped persons—have pride in ourselves because we are to the maximum degree achievable personally and economically independent. [Cheers and applause.] And progress is when we take our places in this complex American society so that others are as dependent upon us as we are dependent upon them. This is the goal we have of achieving the same kind of interdependence as everyone else. The progress toward first-class citizenship for the disabled is really the basis to measure progress in the field of rehabilitation. With your vigor and determination and with the full efforts of other disabled citizens of this wonderful Nation, I look forward to the next decade as a time when the meaning of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, and the finest dreams

of America become a full reality for disabled citizens. [Applause.] Again, I look forward to being with all of you at your next year's Convention. [Cheers and applause.] I treasure our partnership and our friendship. God bless all of you for what you have done, for what you are doing to make and keep America strong, fair, and personalized. Thank you very much. [Loud cheers, prolonged applause.]

President JERNIGAN. Thank you very much, Dr. Adams. We appreciate your coming and being with us.

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The telegram from Harold Russell, Chairman of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, to President Jernigan, to which Dr. Adams referred, reads as follows:

"On behalf of the President I welcome and appreciate the membership and support of the National Federation of the Blind to the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. The Federation, under the outstanding leadership of Kenneth Jernigan, represents the voice and action of the physically handicapped of our Nation. Best wishes for a successful Convention."

As many of you know, we had been communicating with David Mathews, Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, urging him not to attend the luncheon at the ACB convention. During the NFB Convention, more communications went to the Secretary. One Mailgram was signed by 787 people, and a like number of individual messages were sent, all paid for by the members themselves. Since the Secretary addressed a group of about two hundred people at the ACB meeting, he

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received more messages by far than people who heard him there. He acknowledged our urgings to him not to attend the other meeting in a letter whose sincerity you may judge for yourselves.

"July 8, 1976, Statement to Convention of National Federation of the Blind.—Significant social change frequently has its roots in the deliberations and resolutions which emerge from national forums such as the Convention of the National Federation of the Blind currently underway in Los Angeles. The anticipation of participating with those who gather to lay the foundations for meaningful change is always exciting. Over the past few weeks I have received letters and telegrams from many NFB members inviting me to attend the Convention. Unfortunately, these invitations reached me after I had made other commitments which were already set. While I sincerely regret my inability to personally attend, I am comforted by the knowledge that Andy Adams, a close colleague and respected departmental official, is there representing the Department and me. I am aware of the achievements of the NFB and the unselfish tasks you perform on behalf of the Nation's blind consumers. I look forward to working with you and please accept my very best wishes for a rewarding Convention.

"DAVID MATHEWS,  
"Secretary."

The Report from the Office for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, RSA, was given by its long-time Director, Douglas C. MacFarland. He was followed by a panel whose members were Dr. James Nyman, Director, Division of Rehabilitation Services for the Visually Impaired, Nebraska; Kenneth Hopkins, Chief, Office of Blind Services, Washington State; Ed Roberts

Director, Department of Rehabilitation, California, of whom more later; and John Taylor, Assistant Director, Iowa Commission for the Blind.

Because of time constraints, fifteen minutes was allotted to Dr. MacFarland, nine minutes to each of the other panelists, with the expectation that some time would be left for questions and discussion. To keep speakers within their time limits, a timer with a bell was used.

Dr. MACFARLAND. Just to give you a comparison, there were 9,200 blind persons rehabilitated in fiscal 1974—and keep in mind when I talk about the Office, I am talking about our Federal-state partnership. Much of the credit—much of the work is done by the states. At the same time, in 1974 there were 18,000 physically disabled persons who were rehabilitated. We do not have full statistics for 1976, but close-in estimates tell us that in 1976 there were in excess of 10,000 blind persons rehabilitated and 22,000 visually impaired. During the year there were five training courses for the service expediting jobs with Federal Government agencies. These were with Social Security, Internal Revenue, Civil Service, and the Veterans' Administration, involving seventy-one blind persons completing the training and entering employment. A special project, with what we call Projects with Industry, has been conducted for testing the effectiveness of the votrex, which is part of the Kurzweil system, the synthesized speech voice box used as a computer terminal in a job setting. This is a six month's experimental effort involving Michigan State University, the Federal Civil Service Commission in Washington, their job information center in Philadelphia, and the National Computer Center in Georgia. We hope that



at the end of the experiment, which we fully feel will be successful, that we will have about two hundred new jobs available for blind persons. [Appause.] Thank you, and this is what it is all about, really. If you can't find jobs for blind persons, effective jobs, then we are not really doing anything.

In conjunction with the Jobs with Industry program, and the Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind, a new occupational field for blind persons as long-line operators in the Bell System is being opened through an intensive job engineering and training effort. Arrangements have been completed teaming together the Harvard-M.I.T. Rehabilitation Engineering Center, Southwest Bell Incorporated, Arkansas Enterprises, Rehabilitation Services Administration for building special equipment and its installation at Southwest Bell facilities. Candidates for training have been selected and the training has been planned. From all indications, this will open an additional two hundred new positions for blind persons and it is a relatively new field.

Three special training courses for rehabilitation counselors having responsibility for selective placement of blind persons in competitive employment were conducted at Southern Illinois University during the year. This is a program which has been going on for a long time, but there continues to be an unusually high demand for this type of training. A number of guidelines for training rehabilitation teachers and for the utilization of rehabilitation centers were completed, published, and distributed. The manual on rehabilitation teaching was tested in Region VII with the weekend training program for rehabilitation teachers and teacher-aides for Missouri and Kansas, and other training programs are planned in other regions. . . . The following manual

chapters were completed, published, and distributed during the year: Standards for Providing Eyeglasses and Visual Services; Reader, Teaching, Orientation and Mobility Services; Licenses, Tools, Equipment; Initial Stocks and Supplies; Telecommunications, Sensory and Other Technological Aids and Devices. We are just about completing our manual on the services provided by the National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults, recently changed by Congress to the Helen Keller National Center, in Sands Point, Long Island. . . . We had six projects for the older blind in operation during the past fiscal year serving 1,180 individuals, surprisingly resulting in the rehabilitation of 385 persons. . . .

During the year requests for proposals preliminary to negotiating contractual arrangements were completed for the three studies mandated in the Randolph-Sheppard Amendments of 1974. Contracts were let for the study on the feasibility of establishing a retirement, pension, health benefits and sick leave program; and for the development of standards for set-aside funds—maximum and minimum standards for set-aside funds. We were fortunate enough to recoup some money at the end of the fiscal year and arrangements are now going forward for negotiating the contract for the third study—the effect of vending machine income on our Randolph-Sheppard Program and on nonappropriated funds.

During the year an unusual amount of time—and Andy alluded to this before—has been devoted to the preparation of rules and regulations covering the Randolph-Sheppard Act as amended. There have been three rounds of formal meetings—with Federal agencies, with state licensing agencies, and with consumer organizations. The staff has participated in many other meetings

essential to securing what we believe is the widest range of input with respect to what is the most equitable approach for all constituents concerned. I think that I could say without overestimating that we've had twelve to fourteen drafts since we began our work after the proposed rules were published last December. There have been a number of revisions after the proposed rules were published, which, of course, had a forty-five-day comment period, and we extended that to more than sixty days. We received seventy-one letters and 425 comments. And we have attempted to address each and every one of those comments and give them due consideration. We hope that we now have regulations that will be going forward to the Secretary within the next week or two.

In spite of what was a rather disappointing year, during fiscal 1976, in our Randolph-Sheppard Program, we were still able to obtain 131 new locations which I believe is an advance, but certainly we are not moving forward in the program as fast as we would like or that Senator Randolph had anticipated. We hope that when the regulations are in place and we have our studies completed, that we will be able to increase this and begin to achieve the goal that was set by Senator Randolph who felt that we could more than double the number of locations on Federal property. We hope that we can go beyond that and substantially increase the number that are located on other than Federal property.

One other thing that we have accomplished during the year is the development of a training manual that has been tested and is being refined and will be distributed by August 15. It would have been distributed before, but due to illness of some of the faculty at Tennessee University, it has

been delayed. This, Mr. President, is essentially the report of some of the things that we have accomplished. I haven't tried to include the many day-to-day activities that occur in the Office. We have done this, as I indicated last year, with a staff that is somewhat smaller, unfortunately, than the staff that we had in the Office in 1954. Andy told you that this is on its way to being corrected, and we hope that this will happen soon. It's a very, very difficult problem. Not only do we have to get the positions okayed, but we have to get them through personnel and it's the old story—the mills of the gods grind slowly but exceedingly fine. I know that the panel is eager to—[sound of bell—laughter]—there we have it.

President JERNIGAN. Thank you very much, Dr. MacFarland. Will you please remain where you are; you are part of the panel. There are four others with you. Then we would like to have discussion and questions among the panel. I would remind the panel members that we will hold the clock on them. They have nine minutes each. Our first panelist is Dr. James Nyman.

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Dr. Nyman's main discussion centered on provisions for post-employment services and consumer involvement. He noted that these were upgraded for those in the Randolph-Sheppard Program with the amendment to that Act in 1974. However, no like provisions are contained for post-employment services or consumer participation in decisions for those who are clients of other rehabilitation programs. "The more we concentrate our power and resources in this one area of employment [the Randolph-Sheppard Program], the more we restrict the vocational options of all blind persons

in competitive employment. That, I think, is the last thing that any Federationist would want."

Mr. Hopkins was concerned with the rapid growth in both programs and services in the general field of rehabilitation. He worried that the "relationship between the growth and the homogeneity of the programs are beginning to be dictated to the states by Washington. I suspect that the largest impact in the system is the creation of what is known as evaluation standards." Standards which simply measure all programs against the average instead of evaluating their effectiveness can only lead to decline, he thought.

Mr. Taylor began by calling attention to the fact that "the Office for the Blind in the RSA has continued for the past four years to make grants to a number of institutions of higher learning for the training of mobility specialists which all require that applicants have to see 20/40 or better," which is a clear violation of Section 904 of the Education Act Amendments of 1973, but that the institutions of higher learning, the Office for the Blind, and NAC seem to be acting in concert against the visually handicapped in this field. He then noted the nonsense requirements contained in some of the Architectural Barriers provisions supposedly for the safety and comfort of the blind, such as knurled door knobs. He then continued:

"There is a crisis today in the field of vocational rehabilitation. The crisis exists, substantially, because, for whatever reasons, the rehabilitation agencies substantially failed in meeting the needs of this Nation's most severely handicapped persons who desire and require the most effective services that the Nation's resources can bring to

bear to enable them to live useful and productive lives. Let it be said here, that amidst all of the accomplishments, one of the ingredients lacking is effective leadership on the Federal level to make jobs more fruitful and productive." [Applause.]

When it came time to introduce Ed Roberts, Director of the Department of Rehabilitation, California, the following ensued:

President JERNIGAN. Next on the agency panel I had listed Mr. Ed Roberts, Director of the Department of Rehabilitation, Sacramento, California. Mr. Roberts told me that he would be here. I believe he is not here, is that correct? [Voice in background.] Your name is what? I am told that Carolyn Vash [Dr. Carolyn Vash, Chief Deputy Director] is here in his stead. Miss Vash, I want to say something to you since Mr. Roberts is not here, before introducing you. I wish you to understand that what I am about to say is not meant to apply to you in any way or to be personal to you. I am told that you are a fine person and a lady and I am not in any sense critical of you. You work for the Department and, therefore, must go on assignments when you are sent. However, I do wish to say something to Mr. Roberts. I say it from this public platform and would ask that our public relations people see that some press release and comment is made about it. [Applause and cheers.] Mr. Roberts should learn from a Federal official who in 1971 treated this organization with contempt by agreeing to be on a program and then not having the courtesy to show or even to tell us that he couldn't come; that we really do not take kindly to being treated with contempt and condescension. I regard it as being treated with contempt when an official agrees to come, states that he wants to come, and

then does not even do us the courtesy of telling us that he won't come at all. That is the kind of thing that has characterized, from what I can understand, Mr. Roberts' entire administration of the programs of rehabilitation. [Loud cheers and applause.] I will read, again, a portion of the Mailgram which the Federation sent to Mr. Roberts' superior, Mr. Obledo, and will apply it specifically to the instance at hand. Part of the Mailgram said: "It is our understanding that the Department is being operated by its Director, Mr. Ed Roberts, in a political rather than a professional manner . . ." It went on to say that "if reports of this"—meaning the dismissal of Mr. Escontrias—"and other acts of politics in the program are true, the implications for the entire rehabilitation program of the Nation are serious, indeed. If violations of the Federal Rehabilitation Act have occurred, California's Federal funding may be jeopardized. The Congress, the Federal Executive Branch, the media, and the disabled population of the Nation could not passively witness such developments." I then went on to say to Mr. Obledo: "I officially bring these matters to your attention, hoping that action on your part can avert what threatens to become disaster. Perhaps Mr. Roberts does not have the perspective to see all aspects of the situation." Now, just this, in addition. What has occurred here today underscores the attitude which Mr. Roberts seems to have toward the blind and particularly the organized blind. Apparently Mr. Roberts feels that unless the blind with whom he deals are willing to be totally subservient, he does not wish to deal with them. As a matter of fact, it is reliably reported that Mr. Roberts said, and I think I am making an exact quote, that "the National Federation of the Blind is the enemy." My answer to that publicly is, Mr. Roberts, you have named the field of battle. So be it. [Loud

cheers and applause.] We accept the challenge. You have declared war on us. We do not ask you any longer for negotiations. We do not ask you for friendship. We do not ask you for quarter. Do your worst to us and we will do likewise. [Loud cheers and applause.]

Miss Vash, I am sorry to have to introduce you into that kind of environment, but we did not create the environment. I repeat, none of this is meant to be personal to you. We will listen courteously and respectfully to whatever you have to say. You have nine minutes or as much thereof as you choose to take. Please convey the message we have sent to Mr. Roberts. We will convey it ourselves, later.

Dr. VASH. I must say that that is the most unusual introduction I have ever had. [Laughter.] Despite it all, we are in Southern California, which is my home territory. I am the only Chief Deputy in the State who is based down here and I do want to take a couple of my minutes to welcome you to Southern California and to L.A. City and to L.A. County.

I think part of what we are doing in rehabilitation in this city and in this State is really shown here where we have got a city and a county who are making some of the most active outreach consumer involvement efforts that I know of anywhere in the country. I don't know of any other county boards of supervisors who have created commissions for the handicapped. If there are others, I would like to know about them; but the L.A. County Board of Supervisors has done this. The Board's commission have been functioning for several months now. We feel that we are being listened to. I happen to be a member of that commission. All disability groups or



or major categories, sensory, motor, intellectual, and so forth, are represented on both the L.A. City and L.A. County commissions. . . .

Some of the basic programs for us—and I guess I'm the only speaker here today who is from a general agency, so my remarks will be a little bit different from the others—but some of the main things we are working for is the very strong implementation of the severe disability mandate. We have established priorities for the severely disabled, who will be served first, moderately second, and mild third. Because of shortage of funds we have had to cut off on those priorities, so at this time we are serving people only with moderate or severe disabilities. This is in all types of disabilities whether it is sensory, motor, intellectual, or emotional. We are also making concerted efforts to ensure equivalence of service opportunities throughout this large State. We found that our resources were not well deployed in the past, taking into account population centers and geographic spreads, and we are making a great effort now to get those resources more uniformly deployed. Also a very strong emphasis on consumer involvement in planning, which is happening both at the local level with consumer advisory committees, at the middle level, and at the top level. I think one of the things we have learned from the Federation and other organized blind groups is that they historically have had very, very strong leadership and have made gains that no other disability area has made in the past. One of our thrusts now is to try to provide that leadership so that other disability groups can make some of these same kinds of gains. . . .

Two of the major thrusts are spearheading a statewide independent living program movement—the support and survival centers

that are needed for all types of severely disabled people—established throughout the State and also develop linkages with education, between rehabilitation and education at all levels, local, state, and national.

Just one comment on the remarks about Ed. I really feel that the blind and all disabled groups have a much greater friend in Ed than many now realize. I think that some—[sounds of protest and gavel] There is no point in saying it then. Let me just save whatever time I have left to respond to questions. [Applause.]

President JERNIGAN. Thank you for coming, Miss Vash. I am sorry that we cannot treat Mr. Roberts as he has treated us, and we mean nothing personal to you, but there will be no questions for you from the floor. [Applause.] We mean this, again, as indicative to Mr. Roberts. He set the field of battle. We did not. [Applause.] I am only sorry that he did not have the courage to come and do his own business. [Applause.]

Dr. VASH. May I make one comment?

President JERNIGAN. Indeed you may.

Dr. VASH. On that, Ed heard yesterday that this group had evinced a very strong vote of no confidence in him and decided that it would probably escalate problems or that it would be less constructive if he stayed away than if he came. It was not a lack of courage—

President JERNIGAN. So he didn't have the guts to tell us so but sent you to do it for him. [Cheers and applause.] You confirm what we thought was so. He was afraid to come. He didn't have the courage. [Cheers and applause.] Thank you again,



Miss Vash. And as I say, we have no feeling against you at all. [Applause.]

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The questioning which followed was among the most lively of the whole Convention. The debate and discussion went hot and heavy between the panelists and the audience and among the panelists. Most of the questions were to Dr. MacFarland, and he fielded them as best he could, without losing his composure. James Gashel pushed him hard, for example, on the fact that the Office for the Blind does not vigorously pursue possible job opportunities for the blind. The case in point, at the moment, was a cafeteria in the Mine Safety Building, part of the Interior Department, in Beckley, West Virginia. The Office for the Blind played a negative and passive role in obtaining the site for a blind operator both with the Interior Department and the State agency. The NFB had to try to do what it could after the fact. And so it went on standards, education, evaluation, Federal-state relations, and rehabilitation programs generally. President Jernigan then said: "We may disagree with you, Dr. MacFarland, but you've come here and you've not lost your cool. You've talked to us, and listened, and debated. You know that that is appreciated." Resolutions 76-A and 76-B, brought to the floor by the Executive Committee, were read and adopted.

Dr. Adams then summed up the afternoon's discussion quite succinctly:

Dr. ADAMS. I think to try to summarize this discussion we've been through is like trying to describe two porcupines making love. [Laughter.] Just a couple of comments. I would like to say that I, too, wish that Ed Roberts had been able to be here.

[Applause.] I had looked forward to his discussion with you and I was looking forward to joining that to some extent. I want to say that Dr. Jernigan's comments about Dr. Carolyn Vash—they were certainly apropos and appreciated—that she was certainly in a tough spot. I am very pleased, and thank you for being so courteous to her because she has worked hard and has contributed greatly in the field of rehabilitation. [Applause.] I am sure that she is going to work with those in her region very closely, and I am sure after today—she will not forget today [laughter] for a long time. I say that positively.

On behalf of the Secretary—I appreciate his comments that he looked to me to represent him here, and I just want to say that the circumstances were unfortunate. That in working with him, he is determined to do his utmost in helping us with our programs. I only urge you to please try to invite him at our next conference because I am quite confident that if it is at all humanly possible he will accept next year.

I can only summarize the issues this way and maybe say that what's wonderful about what happens at this conference is that there are definite problems of conflict coming out here. Now, that's a whole lot healthier than at some of the other many meetings and conferences that I go to where there are too many of what we call "problems of agreement." There are too many members of the family being too nice to each other, not willing to say the way things really are. [Applause.] And those kinds of things are the most difficult to deal with. And often when daddy says, "Mommy, do you want to go to the opera," and she says, wanting to be cooperative, "Yes, I want to go to the opera; do you want to go?" "Oh sure, if you want to go, I want to go," and both of

them don't want to do, and they end up going to the opera. [Laughter.] But we don't have this here, I am pleased to say, and that's healthy.

Now, one other observation is that a lot of the discussion was based as if there was no tomorrow. In other words, "Why is this this way?" "Well, it is this way because—" and that kind of thing. Well, there is a tomorrow and one of the beauties of hearing these things come out is that the things that are here today do not have to stay that way today and they can be changed. [Cheers and applause.] Now I will just conclude with this comment. I couldn't believe my ears when I heard Senator Chavez stand up and quote somebody who had the audacity to say that the blind are good for nothing. My God, could anybody make a statement like that and be that stupid and not be out of—what's the word in the South—out of their cotton-picking minds. Thank you, Dr. Jernigan. [Cheers and applause.]

President JERNIGAN. I want to thank all of the members of the panel for being here. I especially want to thank Dr. MacFarland for being willing to submit to questioning, and responding. This was good, and I appreciate these people from the state programs coming, and especially, Dr. Adams, we appreciate your coming. So thanks again to all the panel. [Applause.]

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What was left of the afternoon was given to Dr. Bob Mallas, Jr., president of Management Services Associates, Inc., of Texas. The topic was "Challenges Facing Agencies Serving the Blind in the 1970's." Dr. Mallas knows whereof he speaks. His firm conducted what is perhaps the most original

study of programs for the blind in the country and came up with many solutions and conclusions very close to those of the NFB. That study cannot help but influence, to the benefit of the blind, programs for services and systems delivery for some time to come. The text of his address will appear in the October issue of the *Monitor*.

### The Banquet

The NFB Banquet on Thursday evening, attended by more than 1,550 people, was an evening of ceremony, celebration, and general gladness. First Vice President Donald C. Capps, as master of ceremonies, kept things moving but always under control in his calm, gracious, and competent manner. The "more than 1,550 people" included 1,535 Federationists who purchased tickets and a number of honored guests among whom were legislators and mayors from cities in the Los Angeles area. Some of our members regularly invite national and state representatives to join them as guests, and they are glad to come.

As always, the crowd, carefully dressed and polished for the occasion, was early in its eagerness to begin what they knew would be a wonderful evening. The Convention Center had provided another spacious room for us. Although the huge lobby would have held everyone, there was no waiting. All was in readiness. At each place were our NFB souvenir mug, this year with a Bicentennial theme added, an American flag, and to top it off, an orchid from Hawaii—making each table set for eight a celebration of its own.

This year our President, once again, surprised us with a change of pace in his banquet address. Entitled "Blindness: Of Visions and Vultures," it went straight to

the hearts of his listeners as he spoke of attitudes and actions toward the blind in terms which all his blind listeners knew from experience. A number of deaf people, present with their interpreter, were moved close to tears to hear what they felt so beautifully and forcefully expressed; for they, too, are victims of like stereotypes.

Dr. Andrew Adams was the recipient of our Newel Perry Award, which was presented by First Vice President Capps:

Mr. CAPPS. Like the Nobel Peace Prize, the Newel Perry Award is granted only as often as distinguished accomplishment merits. It is given only to those who have made outstanding contributions toward the progress and independence of the blind. Being the highest honor which the organized blind of this country can bestow, it is treated accordingly. It is given sparingly and with appropriate care and selectivity. The last presentation was made in 1973, and before that, in 1969.

For providing the NFB with financial stability, the 1973 recipient of the Newel Perry Award was our own Bernard Gerchen. In 1969 Congressman James Burke of Massachusetts was presented the Newel Perry Award for his dedicated support of our disability insurance bill. Tonight we are very grateful to have this opportunity of honoring another distinguished American.

Therefore, it is with much pleasure that we present the Newel Perry Award of 1976 to Dr. Andrew S. Adams, Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration, Office of Human Development, Washington, D.C. In recent years, Dr. Adams has become an integral part of our great National Conventions as he has won the confidence and hearts of all Federationists throughout the

land. In his capacity as Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration, national programs of rehabilitation have tremendously progressed and have taken on a kind of newness not experienced by the organized blind in the past. Demonstrating that he sincerely cares about the views and philosophy of the organized blind, Dr. Adams selected our own President, Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, as his consultant on programs for the blind. Unlike too many who do not, Dr. Adams carefully listens to the National Federation of the Blind and our President, and lends the support of his high office to those programs and ideals which improve the quality of life for the blind. Likewise, Dr. Adams has denied the support of his office to harmful forces which would prevent the blind themselves from having a representative voice in matters vitally affecting their lives. Dr. Adams understands our concepts and our aspirations to be free and independent and there could be no better time than this, our Bicentennial year, for this freedom and independence to flourish and become a reality. Because Dr. Adams has been willing to act, demonstrating courage and wisdom, blind Americans are assuming their rightful places in our society.

As one of the Nation's top administrators, Dr. Adams has always been guided by principle rather than expediency. We in the National Federation of the Blind have much cause to know and appreciate Dr. Adams' many qualities. All Federationists have become very familiar with his name as he has joined us on the barricades, supporting those ideals in which we strongly believe. He shares our belief that the blind should band together to work toward total integration into society on a basis of equality.

Tonight we of the National Federation of the Blind honor Dr. Adams not only for

his understanding and active support, but for much more. We honor him for his understanding of our goals and our aspirations as well as our objectives. Dr. Adams is not like so many who wish us well and promise us much and then promptly forget us—who profess deep sympathy for us and our problems but act with callous indifference toward them. He is much more than a willing but remote friend. Dr. Adams is a co-worker in our struggle to gain independence and dignity. He joins with us to change dreams into reality, believing fully in the concept that all men have the right and need to function to their fullest capacities.

Dr. Adams, this is why we honor you tonight. We want you to know and we want the world to know that we thank you for having joined with us in our cause. As a tangible expression of our appreciation, it is with deep pleasure that we present this plaque to you, inscribed as follows: "In recognition of dedicated service, the National Federation of the Blind bestows its Newel Perry Award upon Dr. Andrew Adams, our colleague and our friend. He cares; he listens; he understands; he acts. Because of him the blind of America have a better life." [Cheers and applause.]

Dr. ADAMS. Mr. Chairman, I so much appreciate those words. Dr. Jernigan, membership. This honor is so thrilling to me that I'm having a difficult time responding in words. I guess I might respond—I'm trying to combine my feelings with the message that I received from your President tonight. That combination would go something like this: Three years ago I met with you in Chicago. I was tremendously impressed. It was the first time we were together. I was so impressed that I wondered whether it could be repeated. Then last year I met again

with all of you in Chicago. You not only repeated that first conference in Chicago, but you even outdid it. Here for the third consecutive Convention once again you outdid the past two. I think that as far as your Conventions go, the sky is the limit. . . .

This Federation, I sense, is bubbling over, it's boiling, and there are those who are trying to keep the lid on it. But you can't keep the lid on this bubbling thrust that you have. And it's time to move out onto the street—to get those other people to know what you stand for, what you like, and to know that their concepts are just not true. And for this honor you've given me tonight, I don't think you gave me this honor—the Newel Perry Award—only because of what I've done. I think you gave it to me because of some capability that you've assessed that I have and that I can do something in the future for blind people of this country. [Applause.] So my friends, just as humbly as I can say it, I pledge to you, with the constant guidance that Dr. Jernigan and your membership is able to give me, I pledge to you that I will try to carry on the mission that is so important to you and is so important to the blind of this country. I am deeply honored, and please remember my pledge. Thank you so much. [Applause.]

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The Reverend Howard May, president of the Connecticut affiliate, acting as chairman of the Rickard Scholarship Committee, awarded the \$1,200 check to Peggy Pinder. Miss Pinder, who got her early training as a Federationist at the Iowa Commission, is about to enter Yale Law School. She is first, however, going to be a delegate to the Republican National Convention. In accepting the award, she said:



Miss PINDER. Dr. Jernigan, Reverend May, other honored guests, and fellow Federationists. I guess I'd have to say that I'm proud to be up here tonight to be a recipient of the Howard Brown Rickard Scholarship award, because it is a recognition of academic achievement, and it is at the same time a recognition of active Federationism. But I think, far more than that, I feel very humble to be up here before you tonight because it's really you who have taught me the things that I know. You've taught me how to plan and to perceive and to theorize about the world around me. You've taught me how to work hard and to want to do it. And through your love and through your examples you've taught me how to be all that I can be.

As with every Convention, this year's Convention is a rededication for me, but this is a very special time because of your kindness in bestowing this award on me. But I'd like to say, more than anything else, I think there is one cause above all others—there is one cause for my being able to stand here tonight, and that cause is a man who has stretched out his hand to help you and me and all of us, to guide us into understanding and into working toward goals that we can and should achieve, and who lives a life which is exemplary for you and for me and for all of us; a man who has taught me how to think and how to act and how to be. I'd like to ask you to join with me in thanking the real scholar and worker and humanist, the real Federationist among all of us, Dr. Kenneth Jernigan. [Applause.]

This year a new award was given, the Jacobus tenBroek Award. It was presented by the chairman of the tenBroek Award Committee, NFB Second Vice President Ralph Sanders, who said:

Mr. SANDERS. Tonight, for the first time ever, we present the Jacobus tenBroek Award. Like the Newel Perry Award, the Jacobus tenBroek Award is to be granted only as often as distinguished accomplishment merits. Established in 1974, the presentation commemorates the exemplary life-style which our founding President, Dr. tenBroek, set for himself and for all Federationists. It is intended only for a Federationist, a colleague in the movement who through dedication, sacrifice, and courage has made an outstanding contribution toward progress and independence for the blind. It is not surprising, therefore, that it has taken until 1976 for a nominee for the award to be chosen.

Our founding President dedicated his time, energy, and ability—his total being—to a philosophy. A philosophy which holds that blindness need not be a tragedy, that blind people are inherently normal, and that blindness can be reduced to the level of a physical characteristic. He knew the principle to be true and he had the vision to know that blind men and women across this Nation would join together, recognizing a common bond greater than any individual difference, more universal than any local circumstance, and more important than any personal gain. They could make the philosophy a reality. Today, midway through the fourth decade of the organized blind movement, his vision is a reality as we sit together in the largest gathering of the blind ever assembled and the philosophy is the banner under which we gather. But to get here took more than visions and ability, it took a nationally organized blind movement. And Dr. tenBroek gave more than visions and ability, though these he gave abundantly. He gave his life. It is fitting, therefore, that the first presentation of the Jacobus tenBroek Award be made in



California. It is equally fitting that the first recipient be a Californian and a long-time colleague of Dr. tenBroek. It is a great honor and a privilege to present this award to a front-line soldier in the movement, our colleague, our friend—Perry Sundquist. [Cheers and applause.]

The 1959 recipient of the Newel Perry Award, Perry's accomplishments and contributions are far too numerous to list in detail. Suffice it to say that he was there on the barricades with Dr. tenBroek from the beginning. He has been a leader in the organized blind movement in California since the 1930's. Perry has met the measure of the highest tenets of Federationism in both his private and professional life, devoting his energy to the advancement of independence for the blind. For twenty-seven years he served with distinction as Chief of the Division for the Blind in the California Department of Public Welfare, where he applied the Federation philosophy, contributing substantially to the well-being of the blind of California and the Nation, as well as to the strength of the organized blind movement. His professional career is properly punctuated by accomplishment and by award.

But perhaps Perry's most exemplary trait is his dedication to the movement, his willingness to answer every call to service. Elected Second Vice President in 1960, he was elevated to the presidency of the National Federation of the Blind later that year. He served with distinction until July of 1962, providing a bridge across the troubled and difficult days of the civil war. It is through such dedication that our movement has grown to be the truly representative voice of the blind of the Nation. It could be said that Perry, like the youngest son of the king, saw where the young joined the

body. The award reads: "In recognition of dedicated service, the National Federation of the Blind bestows its Jacobus tenBroek Award upon Perry Sundquist, front-line soldier in the movement. He exemplifies the best in us; his life symbolizes courage, devotion, competence, and purpose. We call him our colleague with respect; we call him our friend with love." [Cheers and applause.]

Mr. SUNDQUIST. Mr. President, Master of Ceremonies, Mr. Chairman of the Awards Committee, ladies and gentlemen. I have so many tears in my eyes— For me, this is undoubtedly the highest honor I could ever receive, not only because it comes from my beloved colleagues, the National Federation of the Blind throughout this country, but also because it bears the magic name of Jacobus tenBroek. I first met Chick tenBroek at the California School for the Blind in Berkeley in 1918—of course, we were very young, you understand. I saw him last in a hospital in San Francisco in 1968. During that span of fifty years we became fast friends and comrades in arms. And yet I and all of our colleagues at that time who worked with Chick realized that here was a man who walked with greatness amongst us. In the years ahead, there will be many persons far more worthy than I to receive the Jacobus tenBroek Award, but I assure you none will be more appreciative. Thank you so much.

#### Friday, July 9

The morning agenda contained two items of high interest to Federationists: reports on activities of the International Federation of the Blind and on work with and in the Library of Congress Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

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Rami Rabby, one of our delegates to the International Federation of the Blind and chairman of the NFB Cultural Exchange and International Program Committee led off. His indefatigable work with the CEIP Committee is well known to many Federationists. Dr. Isabelle Grant, who is also one of our delegates and who serves the IFB as Third Vice President, delighted the audience with her pert observations of the international scene. Let it also be known that the indomitable Isabelle let us all help her celebrate her eightieth birthday during this Convention. Hard-working Joanne Fernandes is our third delegate to the international body. Mrs. Fernandes' labors are not as familiar to Federationists for they are frequently hidden under the proverbial bushel of other activities. At any rate, they are appreciated by blind people around the world.

Because library services affect blind people so closely, there was more than usual concern in the discussions about services. Mrs. Florence Shropshire's paper "The Consumer View: Committee on Library Services, National Federation of the Blind" appears elsewhere in this issue. Frank Kurt Cylke, Chief, Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, delivered his remarks on "Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped: Collection Development, Braille Technology, and a View for the Future." Those remarks also appear in full in this issue.

In introducing Mr. Cylke, President Jernigan expressed his pleasure at the cooperation which has been developed between the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped and the National Federation of the Blind and our appreciation for Mr. Cylke's willingness to come each year and

answer the questions many Federationists have about services.

The questions were many and Mr. Cylke did what he could to answer them fully. The questions covered a variety of subjects: the best way to relocate a library, where it should be located, should the change be processed through the Library of Congress or through the state legislature? How do we get better quality cassettes and what is the process now used? The problems for blind readers if libraries for the blind are located in general library settings were also discussed. The proper use of guidelines issued by the Library of Congress and the tendency of local librarians to treat them as the law of the land was brought to Mr. Cylke's attention. A consensus vote on changing the format of the Braille Book Review indicated that those present would prefer the Braille edition with full annotation to the print editions and more titles with little annotation. Though his time was limited, Mr. Cylke patiently answered all questions to the best of his ability and to the satisfaction of the audience.

In-house business and standing committee reports were the subjects of the afternoon agenda. The Subcommittee on Budget and Finance had reported earlier. Anthony G. Mannino, National White Cane Chairman, gave the report of his committee's activities and indicated that through the efforts of the state affiliates, upward of \$8,000 had been donated to the National Federation by the time of this Convention.

Lawrence Marcelino, Secretary of the Jacobus tenBroek Memorial Endowment Fund, reported on the status of that fund and then called the Honor Roll of the States. That resulted in something over \$11,000

donated and pledged to the Endowment Fund on the spot.

The Convention then turned its attention, and after some lively debate, adopted the remaining resolutions brought by the Resolutions Committee to the Convention floor.

The PAC Plan grew during the Convention and especially during the Friday sessions when some committee members tackled their delegates as they listened to the program. California at the moment gives \$3,240 annually, through twenty-four people, showing the largest increase in any state. However, considering its size and the number of members, it should be doing much better. Iowa is next with \$2,340 annually, through fifteen people. During 1975, \$53,000 was given to the NFB Treasury through the PAC Plan. Let us see if we cannot more than double it before next year's Convention. This is a plant that needs tender loving care if it is going to produce the kinds of services we want from it. Let's feed it a lot of green stuff this year.

As happens at every Convention, about one fourth of the people who attended did not register. We know this from the number of rooms reserved and used for attendance at the Convention. We also know from head counts that more than the 1,603 who did register were present on the floor at times. Our figures indicate that over 2,500 people were present. Let us do what we can to see that all those who attend register at the next Convention in New Orleans.

## NFB Convention 1977

The 1977 Convention of the National Federation of the Blind will be held in New Orleans, July 3-8, 1977. The Braniff Place will serve as headquarters for making reservations. We will be housed in three hotels: Braniff Place, Governor House, and Delta Towers. Delta Towers is about three blocks from Braniff Place and Governor House is in between. Current plans call for a constant shuttle bus to circulate between the three. Rooms will be \$10.00 for singles and \$14.50 for doubles.

Delta Towers has been converted to hotel use after having been apartment efficiency units. Consequently, the rooms are apt to be somewhat larger than in the usual hotel and have sinks and refrigerators since only the stoves have been removed.

Make reservations as follows: Write Braniff Place, 1500 Canal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70140, or call Braniff Air Lines through their non-toll number, which is (800) 527-4000. You will receive confirmation. However, whether you send it with your reservation or later, there is a mandatory ten-dollar deposit. There is no guarantee in which hotel you will be housed, but that information will be sent to you before Convention time.

Reservations are going rapidly. This is being written early in August and many have already got their reply reservations in hand. Do not delay and don't forget to include a ten-dollar deposit. See you in New Orleans. □

## BLINDNESS: OF VISIONS AND VULTURES

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY

KENNETH JERNIGAN

PRESIDENT, NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND  
AT THE BANQUET OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION*Los Angeles, July 8, 1976*

Behold a king took forth his three sons to judge their fitness to govern the kingdom, and they stopped by a field, where a vulture sat in the branches of a dead tree. And the king said to the oldest son, "Shoot—but first tell me what you see."

And the son replied: "I see the earth and the grass and the sky . . ."

And the king said, "Stop! Enough!" and he said to the next son, "Shoot—but first tell me what you see."

And the son replied, "I see the ground and a dead tree with a vulture sitting in the branches . . ."

And the king said, "Stop! Enough!" and he said to his youngest son, "Shoot—but first tell me what you see."

And the young man replied, his gaze never wavering, "I see the place where the wings join the body." And the shaft went straight—and the vulture fell.

Yes, a fable. But also a moral—a reminder—a commitment.

Last year on July 1st (ironically, the very day of the opening of our convention) the news commentator Paul Harvey made a national radio broadcast. Entitled "Not All Equal," it said:

"When are we going to stop deluding ourselves about 'equality'? A pitiful problem has developed where our Federal and

state governments try to enforce equal job opportunities for the handicapped. Of course it can't be done. Frequently the handicapped are turned down for jobs without being told why. The why may involve higher insurance rates, or installation of special signals for the deaf or blind.

"Let me confide," he continued, "that politicians and the news media—where a concern is humanitarian—rarely dare speak out against the poor, the deprived, the unlovely, or the imperfect. However impractical the pretense—these thought leaders must continue to pretend that we are all equal. When, in fact, of course, no two of us are."

Harvey rested his case with a quotation from the British author C. S. Lewis:

"No man who says, 'I'm as good as you are' believes it. He wouldn't say it if he did. The St. Bernard never says it to the toy dog, nor the scholar to the dunce, nor the employable to the bum, nor the pretty woman to the plain. The claim to equality is made only by those who feel themselves to be in some way inferior. What it expresses is precisely the itching, smarting, writhing awareness of an inferiority which the patient refuses to accept."

So declared Paul Harvey, and the network carried his message to millions. If the problem we confront comes not from misconceptions and discrimination but from

the very nature of our condition—from our blindness—then we should not fight it but face it. It will do us no good to complain or whimper, nor will it help to be bitter. Facts are facts, and they should be dealt with as such—straightforward and to the point.

If the Harvey thesis is right, we have made a tragic mistake in organizing at all. From a handful in 1940, the National Federation of the Blind has grown to its present size of more than fifty thousand members. The reason for the growth is simple. It is our philosophy, and what that philosophy promises. The Federation is based on the proposition that the principal problem of blindness is not the blindness itself but the mistaken notions and ideas about blindness which are held by the general public. We of the Federation believe that the blind (being part of the broader culture) tend to see themselves as others see them. Accepting the mistaken public attitudes, we help those attitudes become reality. Moreover, we believe that the governmental and private service agencies are also victims of the same misconceptions and stereotypes and that they make their voluminous studies, plan their programs, and custodialize their clients, not (as they claim) from professional expertise and knowledge but from ignorance and prejudice, absorbed from the general culture. Finally, we believe that when we as blind people accept the second-class role assigned to us by the agencies and the public, we do it because of social conditioning, not because of correct information or necessity. We do it because of fable, not fact.

This is what the National Federation of the Blind is all about. It is why we organized. It is why we continue. It explains our actions and our behavior—why we intend to speak for ourselves, why we demand a

voice in the programs affecting us, and why we insist that only persons chosen by us presume to speak for us. Others cannot do it—even if they are employees or administrators of agencies, even if they claim to be professional experts, and (for that matter) even if they are blind. We speak for ourselves; we do it with our own voice; and we will permit no one else to do it for us. We have always said (and we say today) that we are able to work with the sighted, play with the sighted, and live with the sighted on terms of full equality; and the sighted are capable of accepting us as equals and partners.

Yet, if the Paul Harvey thesis is true, our whole philosophy is a lie. The National Federation of the Blind is not only useless—it is downright destructive: for it promises a future which is impossible to realize and beckons with a dream which can never come true. If the Harvey thesis “tells it like it is,” let us repent of our folly, disband our movement, and apologize for the trouble we have caused. Let us take whatever charity and kindness society offers. Let us go our way in acceptance and resignation—and let us do it alone; for there will be no need for concerted action, no purpose in pretending we are equals.

But, of course, the Paul Harvey thesis is not true. Everything in us rejects it. All of our experience denies it. The facts refute it. It is the very kind of blatant ignorance which called the Federation into being in the first place and which still continues to poison the public mind. We want no strife or confrontation, but we will do what we have to do. We are simply no longer willing to be second-class citizens. They tell us that there is no discrimination—that the blind are not a minority. But we know who we are, and we will never go back. The vulture



sits in the branches of a dead tree, and we see where the wings join the body.

As has always been the case, our principal problem is still lack of understanding on the part of the public. Some of the misconceptions we confront are overt; some are subtle. Some are deadly; others simply ridiculous. Several months ago I received a letter from a man in Missouri:

"Dear Sir," he said. "There is a case here of a blind girl around twenty years of age who has been awfully mistreated. I am only a friend to her and her mother. I couldn't be yellow dog enough to make love to a Blind and then try to lie out of it and blame somebody else."

Beneath the crudity, that letter speaks with terrible eloquence, calling up the anguish of the centuries. It spotlights the problem which we the blind must face. That problem is not, as Paul Harvey seems to think, centered in questions such as our need for special signals or the inability of employers to hire us because their insurance rates might go up. Rather, it deals with such basics as the refusal to let us compete (with no favors asked) for jobs we are perfectly well able to fill, denial of our right to equal treatment under the law, arbitrary rejection (without reason) of the notion that we can function as competent human beings, and abridgment of our dignity as persons.

The discriminations against us are not imaginary, but real—not exceptional but commonplace. The proof is overwhelming and irrefutable. It is illustrated, for instance, in two recent court cases. In one a mother was threatened with the loss of her child, on the grounds that, as the judge put it, she "is industrially blind, and does not have the

ability to care for the child." In the other case a married couple was declared unfit to adopt a male child because, in the words of the husband, it was "felt that a boy could not relate to me because of my blindness." It need only be added that hundreds of blind mothers are successfully caring for their offspring every day and that adoption of children by blind parents has occurred repeatedly with no problem. In fact, when the adoption case in question was successfully concluded (after considerable conflict with the judge), the boy had no trouble at all relating to his blind father. Yet, they tell us that the problem is in us, not society—that there is no discrimination and that the blind are not a minority. But we know who we are, and we will never go back. The vulture sits in the branches of a dead tree, and we see where the wings join the body.

Last year the American Legion Auxiliary of Oregon prohibited a blind girl (Donna Bell by name) from taking her place as a duly elected delegate to the annual Oregon Girls State observance. The rejection was made on grounds that (as a blind girl) she could not be "physically fit." This arbitrary ruling was subsequently reversed at the insistence of Governor Tom McCall, who said of Donna that "her leadership, character, honesty, scholarship, cooperativeness, and *her physical fitness* qualify her to be here." She attended; she was accepted by her peers; and she performed without problem or incident.

In September of 1975 the New Orleans *Times Picayune* featured the headline: "Blind Children Hate Food, Must Be Force Fed." The article which followed quoted a staff member of a Louisiana institution for the blind and handicapped as saying: "A blind child would starve to death if you didn't force him to eat . . . they hate food."

Those of you attending this banquet can judge that one for yourselves. It has been my experience that we who are blind stow away about as much food with about as much gusto as anybody else. But Paul Harvey would probably tell us that our objection to such nonsense about our eating habits, only proves that we are "patients," expressing the "itching, smarting, writhing awareness of an inferiority which we refuse to accept." Yet, they tell us that there is no discrimination—that the blind are not a minority. But we know who we are, and we will never go back. The vulture sits in the branches of a dead tree, and we see where the wings join the body.

The exclusions and discriminations are, of course, not limited to any geographic area, any age group, or any particular type of situation. They occur anywhere and everywhere. Witness the episode of the drugstore proprietor in Matawan, New Jersey, who informed a blind customer that he should use the back door since the front of the building is mostly glass. When the customer persisted in entering through the front door, like any other first-class citizen, he was bluntly ordered to go around to the back door or never come to the store again. In other words knuckle under or stay out.

To be sure, this is an extreme case. We are not so often thrown out as put down. Recently I received a letter from Junerose Killian, one of our leaders from Connecticut, in which she related the following:

"The other day, when I was picked up for my class in Transactional Analysis, . . . the priest whom we also picked up inquired of the minister who was driving the car: 'What clinic are we taking her to?' Of course, he automatically assumed that I must be a charity case, and he was astonished

to find that I was one of his colleagues in the class."

This letter from Connecticut (this drama in microcosm) symbolizes the attitude of the ages. It refutes Paul Harvey. It says in graphic and unequivocal terms who we are, why we have organized, what we must accomplish, what the public-at-large must learn, and what those who knowingly and deliberately obstruct our path are invited to do—and where they can go. It is a sermon in miniature, a blueprint for Federationism.

Shortly after our convention last year Patti Jacobson, who is one of the Federation's student leaders, repounded to a want ad which appeared in the Lakewood, Colorado *Sentinel*. She tells it this way:

"I called to inquire about the job and was told to come on Tuesday for an interview. The ad indicated that the job was for telephone ticket sales, but no other information was given. I arrived at the office and was told to speak with Joe Chapman. Upon noticing that I was blind, he immediately said that I could not take this job because there were cards with names and addresses on them, which I could not read. I offered to get the cards brailled. I offered to have a reader come and read the cards. Each suggestion I made was either ignored, or answered rudely. When he began to see that my suggestions were valid, he started making irrelevant excuses such as: 'Many times these businessmen make excuses, and you have to know what to say to them,' and 'I give directions at the beginning of each day, and you would have to digest them.' I ask you, what does blindness or sight have to do with following directions—using one's ears and mind to listen and think? He later said that he didn't have time to spend with me individually. He

never did say what he would have to do for me that he does not have to do for the other employees. When I asked him what he does for the others (I was going to point out that he would do just the same for me, no more, no less), he rudely said, 'That isn't any of your business.'

"He was even further demeaning by saying, 'Believe me, I understand; I've been down and out, too.' He still clings to the old notion that all blind persons are down and out. After some discussion (I was trying to find out more about the job, explain my qualifications and capabilities, and make suggestions, and Mr. Chapman was interrupting), he finally told me to leave. When I would not, because I still had not been interviewed, he threatened to call the police. I had come down there for an interview, and he would not grant me that right."

That is what happened to Patti Jacobson—not in another century or another decade but less than a year ago. It was occurring in the same month that Paul Harvey was making his broadcast. Did her demand for equal treatment prove, as Harvey would apparently contend, that she was inferior and knew it—that she was only feeling the "itching, smarting, writhing awareness" of second-class status which she (the patient) refused to accept? Or did her demand prove the exact opposite? She was not asking for special equipment or special concessions. She was only asking for the opportunity to try, the chance to fail or succeed on her own merit: equal treatment, no favors asked. Yet, they tell us that there is no discrimination—that the blind are not a minority. But we know who we are, and we will never go back. The vulture sits in the branches of a dead tree, and we see where the wings join the body.

It is bad enough when the uncomprehending public believes we are children or patients, but it is pitifully worse when we believe it ourselves—conditioned by the old assumptions and brainwashed by the ancient myths. Listen to this self-description by a blind man in Japan, taken from a Japanese book entitled *How Can I Make What I Cannot See?*:

"If you lose something as big as your eyes," he says, "then you're not so greedy about the rest of the world anymore. If you're not greedy, if you have very few desires, then don't you think that in the end you have become much richer? Since I've lost my eyesight, I have found I want very little. My wife guides me around hand in hand. I don't spend much money. I hear lots of music I never heard before, and I don't have to witness horrible incidents. Thus, I have great peace of mind. Doesn't my life sound richer?"

"This," he concludes, "is what we call the blind man's heaven." The worst of it is that these remarks were made in the course of a lecture to young blind students on what the speaker called the "positive virtues of blindness."

He is, indeed, a cripple; and he will probably bring his students to the same condition—not because of blindness but because of society and what it has taught him to believe and become. The tragedy cries out for justice. Yet, Paul Harvey tells us (and the network carries his message) that the problem is not in society, but in us.

Barbara Pierce is one of the leaders of our movement in Ohio. She is in this audience tonight. She is an attractive, capable, busy, normal woman—married to a college professor, raising a family, and minding her

own business. She works to change misconceptions where she finds them and recognizes the value of united action on the part of the blind.

A few months ago the Public Relations Committee of the National Federation of the Blind held a seminar, and Barbara attended.

"The PR seminar was very useful," she said, "and raised the level of Federation spirit in the group. I thought you would be interested in a little piece of public education I managed during a cab ride on Sunday. Inspired by the conference, I decided to engage in some spreading of the word. I learned to my consternation that the cab driver had always assumed that blind girls, as he put it, 'got fixed by doctors so that they would have nothing to worry about in that way.' I didn't feel equal to inquiring whether the problem was that blind girls couldn't handle the emotion or the children. I set him straight, but I learned that you never know when you will meet extraordinary ideas."

As President of the Federation I receive many letters. Some are brief, and some are long. They cover the entire spectrum of human experience—tragedy, humor, love, hate, joy, sorrow, pathos, and fear. Through the years I have shared many of these letters with you in articles, releases, and speeches. Yet, I have never received a communication which touched me more deeply or spoke more eloquently than the one I am about to read to you. It says it all and "tells it like it is." For obvious reasons I have changed the names. It was written at the time of last year's Convention. Here it is:

"DEAR MR. JERNIGAN: I am a fully sighted woman, age 23, who is dating a

blind man, age 23. You may know him—his name is Jim Smith.

"When I first joined NFB, I did so because I wanted to better understand the concerns and problems that Jim had. I knew there were problems and discriminations, but I never knew they were so overt until just recently.

Both of us are college educated and now hold very good jobs. Jim works for the Social Security Commission and I teach blind children. My philosophy in teaching is that they are just children and need the same things that all children do. I believe that in order to teach them, I must look at them first as children and second as children who need special training in certain areas. If I can't do this, the only thing I'll teach them is how to be physically handicapped and blind. Because of my job, I had begun to understand why Jim was so angry with public attitudes. I, too, have experienced anger toward people who (when they see my children) shake their heads and say, 'Poor pitiful little thing,' and then say, 'But he's so happy' as if the only thing he's capable of doing is being pleasant. My children *are* happy. They also are smart, sweet, cranky, mean, irritable, etc. They're all the things all children are. They get discipline when they need it and praise when they earn it. They are *not* told how wonderful and brave they are. They are praised for accomplishments and praised for trying as well. I tell my children that I will never ask them to do anything that I don't think they can do. I expect them to achieve and they expect achievement, too. I think this is the only way a blind child can grow up to be a worthwhile adult. I don't want my children to think that every little achievement is earth shattering. All my children are proud of their accomplishments and

they should be—they worked hard for them; but I think it's insulting to the child to go on and on about how wonderful he is. To me it implies that you think the child is stupid to begin with and you never had enough faith in him to think he could do it in the first place. I am learning Braille now and Jim is helping me. He praises and encourages, but he doesn't act as if I've done something out of the ordinary. I think that is much more of a compliment. I feel as if he knew I could do it. If he made a big deal out of it, I would think that he thinks I am somewhat feeble-minded and that it really is something for such a dimwit as me to learn Braille.

"I feel anger toward parents who baby their children and never permit them or make them do anything. All children fall down, fall out of swings, bump their heads, etc., and the children I teach have a right to fall down, too. I know it's hard for some of these children to do certain things, but they have to try. When you get these children in a classroom they're almost impossible to teach. They have been made to feel that they don't have to do anything, and they'll grow up into adults who think the world owes them a favor. Another group of parents I detest are the ones who are ashamed of their children. These children are also hard to teach. They feel that they're ugly and unloved. They stay angry and hurt all the time because they have been made to dislike themselves. I believe that you have to learn to like and accept yourself first before you can expect anyone else to. I love my children, and I've known anger and hurt because of various reactions to them. The reaction has never been cruel—pitiful and sickening, yes—but not cruel.

"But this weekend I saw discrimination and cruelty, and for the first time I fully

understood just how important NFB really is. In my experience I have come in contact with the *pitiful reaction*: 'Poor pitiful little thing. It must be awful to go through life like that'; the *brave and wonderful syndrome*—everything the child does is somehow beyond the realm of human expectations: 'My, aren't you smart!' The child is always described as 'special' and 'brave'; nobody expects him to be able to do anything, and when he does, praise is grossly out of proportion. *Rejection*: the child is ignored or avoided.

"Jim and I have experienced a mixture of all three. Friday night, Jim and I had some people over for a cookout. I was in the kitchen fixing baked beans and deviled eggs. Jim came in and asked if there was something he could do. I asked him to slice the tomatoes. (I never meant to start a riot. I only wanted the stupid tomatoes cut up.) One of the other men came in the kitchen and said, 'But, he might cut his finger.' Jim told him that he had cut tomatoes before and was sure he could do it again. He did so and soon had a nice plateful. The other man, who stayed to watch, then took Jim by one arm and the plate of tomatoes in the other to show everybody what he had done. (A cerebral palsied child who has just learned to walk doesn't get that much praise.)

Jim then proceeded to walk out back and light the charcoal. The same man said, 'Are you going to let him do that?' I shrugged and said, 'Why not?' The man jumped up and ran out back. When he came back, all he could talk about was how remarkable Jim was.

"Everyone calmed down and we began to eat. Then it started to rain. Jim got up and said to me, 'Are the car windows down?'



They were, so Jim proceeded to run outside to roll them up—without his cane. The other man jumped up and grabbed Jim's cane. He said, 'Does Jim need this?' I said, 'No. Don't worry so about him. He's fine.' Jim came back and we started to eat again. Jim wanted some more beans, so he went to the stove and got them. The comment then was, 'That is just wonderful.' What is so wonderful about dipping beans? Jim told me later (after they left) that he felt like taking a bow after everything he had done. I don't think he did anything out of the ordinary, and neither does he. The whole night he felt as if he were on exhibit, and I was experiencing a strong desire to stand up and scream, 'He's not stupid, and he's not a child. He's not doing anything terrific, so shut up!'

"It didn't end there. Later on that night, Jim and I made a trip to the hospital emergency room. He had got into some poison ivy, and it had spread to his eyes. The nurse on duty was horrible. She didn't think he was remarkable—she thought him to be blind, deaf, mute, stupid, and incapable of doing anything. She asked me, 'What is *his* name? Where does *he* live? Do *his* eyes itch?' I was offended and said, 'I think he can answer his own questions.' Jim calmly told her what she wanted to know, but I could tell he was mad.

"When he went in for treatment, a man came over to me and said, 'You are so wonderful to be kind to that poor man.' I tried to explain that I felt lucky to have a man like Jim. (And I am. He's the best thing that ever happened to me. When we're together, I feel happy and secure and protected. I love him.) After I finished trying to explain to this man our relationship, he said, 'You mean you're dating him? Why would a pretty little thing like you want him? He's blind.' Then I said something I should not have said. 'Yes,

he is blind, but he's more of a man than you'll ever be.' Jim came out of treatment then, and we left.

"Saturday afternoon some more friends came over, and we all went roller skating. It was fun and we all had a good time. When we got back to Jim's apartment, one of the girls said to me, 'You really are good to Jim. He needs somebody like you.' I told her that I needed him, too. She then asked me if when we were alone was he able to do all the things that other men do. You can imagine my shock at such a question. I assured her that he was.

"By Sunday, I was so overwhelmed with all that had happened I couldn't even think. Jim knew something was wrong. I told him that I was okay. He had some cans that needed to be labeled, so I started doing that on his braille. I was putting a label on a can of pineapple juice. I spelled it wrong. Jim said he had never seen it written that way. So I cried. He looked utterly shocked that I was crying over pineapple juice. So he said, 'I'm going to ask you one time what's wrong, and if you don't want to tell me that's okay, but I'd like to be able to help you with it.' So I told him.

"I told him that I didn't think it was fair, and that I loved him too much to watch him put up with all that mess. Jim is a sweet, loving, compassionate, intelligent, sexy, desirable man; and I love him, and it hurts for everybody else to treat him like some kind of freak. He's got such a good self-image. And I don't want that changed. He said, 'Honey, take it easy. You'll get used to it.' No, I won't. I am not going to get used to seeing him insulted.

"I just can't understand what difference it makes whether he sees or not. One of our

friends recently said to me, "You really are an exceptional person that you can accept Jim." I said that I really wasn't, and that I just didn't think about it. She said, "Oh, it must be hard to forget a thing like that." I told her that I didn't try to *forget* it, I just didn't *think* about it—the same as you don't think about the fact that someone has brown hair. It really makes very little difference what color his hair is, and it's the same way with Jim. I know he can't see, and I don't try to forget about it, but I don't really think about it. She couldn't understand. She said, "But it is so obvious." I told her that she stopped looking when she saw the glasses—and that she couldn't see the man behind them, and that she was 'blinder' than Jim is. One friend—gone.

"The real killer comes when people find out that I'm a special education teacher. I don't think I need to tell you what they say, then.

"Jim stayed with me half of the night. He talked to me and listened to me cry. I hope you understand that I wasn't crying because I feel sorry for him but because I love him, and it hurts me when people do such horrible things.

"If you have any suggestions as to what to say to these people, I would appreciate hearing them.

"Sincerely yours."

How could I respond to such a letter! Its poignant feeling and depth of understanding left nothing to be added—no room for elaboration. It said all there was to say. I called the writer and told her she had strengthened my faith in humanity. I told her the Federation would never quit until the put-downs and denials were finished.

I said I felt honored to walk by her side in the march to freedom.

That march has been long, and the end is not yet in sight. The road stretches on for decades ahead, and it stretches backward to the nightmare past of slavery and pain. Yes, I say slavery, and I mean exactly what I say. I use the word deliberately, for no black was ever forced with more absolute finality to the sweat of the cane fields or driven with more terrible rigor to the heat of the cotton rows than we have been forced to the broom shops and backwaters and driven to the rocking chairs and asylums. Never mind that the custody was kindly meant and that more often than not the lash was pity instead of a whip. It was still a lash, and it still broke the heart and bruised the spirit. It shriveled the soul and killed the hope and destroyed the dream. Make no mistake! It was slavery—cruel, degrading, unmitigated slavery. It cut as deep as the overseer's whip and ground as hard as the owner's boot.

But that was the past—another time and another era. This is a new day. It is true that the vestiges of slavery still linger. The drugstore owner still sends us to the back door, and the courts still tell our women that they cannot keep their children and our men that they cannot be suitable fathers. We are told that we hate food, that we cannot go to Girls State, and that we cannot be interviewed for a job. It is automatically assumed that we are headed for the clinic instead of the classroom; the cab driver thinks that all blind girls must be "fixed"; and the sighted woman weeps for the pain and humiliation of the man she loves. Some of our own people grovel and simper about "the positive virtues of blindness," and Paul Harvey sums it up by telling us that our claim to equality is simply the "itching,

smarting, writhing awareness" of the inferiority which we (as patients) know we have but refuse to accept. Doubtless there is not one of us (sighted or blind) who has totally escaped unscarred from the conditioning. We must wait until at least the next generation for that. Many of the blind have not yet fully understood and have, thus, not joined the movement. Some of our local affiliates are chapters in name only, waiting for the touch of a leader and the sound of the call to awaken. Much of our work is still ahead—yearning, challenging, needing, and waiting to be done.

All of this is true, but we must see it in perspective. It is not that our situation is worse or our problems greater today than in former times. Far from it. It is only that we have become aware and that our level of expectation has risen. In other days we would hardly have noticed, and even if we had, we would not have been organized to communicate or prepared to resist. We have it better now than we have

ever had it before, and tomorrow is bright with promise.

As we make our advance and set our daily skirmish lines we come to the fight with gladness—not with cringing or fear. We come with a song on our lips and joy in our hearts, for we have seen the vision of hope and felt the power of concerted action and self-belief. In the conflict ahead we will take casualties. We know it, and we are prepared for it. Whatever the price, we will pay it. Whatever the cost, we will bear it. The stakes are too high and the promise too certain to let it be otherwise. We are organized and moving forward. We *will be* free—and the sighted will accept us as partners and equals. We know who we are, and we will never go back. The vulture sits in the branches of a dead tree, and we see where the wings join the body. Our gaze will not waver. Our shaft will go straight to the mark, and the vulture will fall. My brothers and my sisters, the future is ours. Come! Join me on the barricades, and we will make it come true! □

## THE CONSUMER VIEW: COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY SERVICES, NFB

BY

MRS. FLORENCE SHROPSHIRE

Our honorable committee members Steven Hoad, Sharon Gold, Hazel Staley, Sue Ammeter, and Professor Selvin have gnawed away at pin-pointing the problems of the Nation's libraries for the blind in preparation for preparing a consumers guide to library use.

In addition Professor Selvin has made a detailed analysis of how the APH-modified G.E. Cassette machine can be improved.

It has been a pleasure to work with such competent, cooperative, and agreeable people.

Joseph de Maistre, noted French philosopher said, "Every country has the government it deserves." We see this demonstrated every day when we consider our "non involvement" in politics, when we don't act as watch people at Capitol Hill, in our state capitals, at our county court houses. I must confess that I missed voting in my first Alexandrian election—because—though I registered to vote all right—I took for granted the polls stayed open until 8 p.m. as they did in Des Moines and—arriving at 7:30—I found they closed at 7. So I deserve the city council that says we must put our garbage out at the curb. To see a beautiful city such as ours—immaculately groomed, each grass blade manicured—festooned with at best, bags of trash trussed up like plastic packs, at worst food, foul and filthy. I deserve a city council which doesn't have the courage to make one of the main streets a pedestrian mall—though it is obvious it

would be better thus—because of a few vigorous complainers.

Yes, we deserve all the institutions we have—our city councils—our Presidents—truly Nixon was a product of this society. We are responsible for his badness—but we are also responsible for his exposure and disgrace!

We help to bring about each crime. We share in the criminal's guilt—we also share in his punishment, and if he reforms, we share in that.

If our mores, our total philosophy—individually and collectively—simply *would not* countenance attitudes and acts leading to crimes—and we were vigilant in the construction and maintenance of our social fabric, these crimes would not—could not occur. Also, if the tide of individual and collective thought relating to punishment and rehabilitation were strong and unwavering—it could not be resisted!

At the same time a society is creating criminals and their crimes, it is also creating heroes and their deeds of valor—their lives of selfless service. Our society created Dr. tenBroek and thus the National Federation of the Blind and it deserves him and the movement. It created Dr. Jernigan and it deserves him. It also created and deserves the hundreds of little guys and gals who work quietly, humbly, faithfully—unnoticed, unapplauded—the membership fifty thousand strong which is the NFB.

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Speaking of institutions—of deserving what we have—brings me to libraries for the blind—a perfect example of having what we deserve or deserving what we have. So, what do we have? Are our libraries good ones? No doubt that depends on which ones you are looking at and your point of view. Probably the garbage collector feels his service is exemplary, even as he slops out some of his burden and leaves the containers all askew. I'm not saying our library service is really related to garbage—though when I consider some of the books chosen for the program, I'm not so sure.

What does the library service amount to? Untold millions of books have gone out to untold thousands of borrowers since the service was started in the early 1930's—why as of May 31, Iowa alone had sent more than 2,491,564 books to its 5,000+ borrowers. So borrowers do get books—and every now and again they get the ones they want, but if the complaints about the service were measured on a growlie scale, it would be as it was when the Concorde landed at Dulles—the needle would go right over the edge of the machine. Conversely, if the plaudits were measured on an approved scale the needle would hardly quiver. So, what's wrong? The complaints I hear run the gamut—don't get enough books—get too many books—all the books are filled with sex and violence—the books are too soft—have no substance—the condition of the books is bad—they are gritty with dirt—feel as though jam, honey, or molasses had been spilled on them. The records are all mixed up or they aren't all there. The cassettes break. The narrators have difficult accents. The narrators can't read well. The library is not where I can get at it—it is not open when I can go. The library won't answer my questions. They never have anything on the subjects I'm interested in. The

magazines are always out of date by the time I get them. They will only send me an old clunker of a machine. The librarians are patronizing.

So the service is ratty, the book collection is a disgrace. The staffs leave much to be desired. Who is responsible? We are—all of us! This is the age of the consumer—the aggressive consumer. When we get a book in poor condition, do we take voice to telephone and report it to the person in charge of our library or do we just sit back and grumble as I do when I see dogs sniffing through the refuse on a street where Washington and Lafayette walked?

When we get a book we don't like—is it one we asked for or did we neglect to send requests? (Librarians tell me one third of their borrowers never send requests.) When I was working as a librarian how many times people said to me—"Oh, just send me a book you would like." Little did those lovers of the sweet and light know that my favorite reading is William Faulkner with his stark delineation of people—not always pretty.

So we need to make it our business to *know* what good library service can be. We need to know how useful reference service is—whether it relates to the impact of polyunsaturated fats, the average earning of a Georgia peanut farmer, a review for the movie "Barry Lyndon," or a recipe for corn bread stuffing (something I have been seeking recently—after marrying a southerner). We need to—not just long for—but actively *seek*—through our library a bibliography—if we are making a study for a club report, or going abroad—all the books on Mary Queen of Scots, or magazine articles on tipping on board ship or in various ports. We need to have and use—local material—



who believes what on candidates—our city, county, and state history.

Have we *insisted* that our libraries use volunteers effectively to enrich their programs? Have we *insisted* that they have workable, reasonable charge-out systems—operating on the premise that we *can* and *will* be responsible for our books? Have we *insisted* that our libraries give up the Mickey Mouse method that endeavors—using precious staff time—to keep track of every book we have ever read from the year 1933 when this all began? What a grim endeavor! What an exercise in futility! What a waste of tax money!

Have we insisted to the governing body that our libraries be staffed equally competently with other libraries—that our libraries be housed equally competently?

On the national level, the policy-setting level, the primarily book-selecting level—have we been imperative in our statement that at the bottom line our views must be heard—must be reflected—must prevail? Have we taken a square look at each problem and worked for its solution?

Have we invited, urged—nay insisted that the library staff members attend NFB meetings so that we could work on their attitudes—could indoctrinate them on the fundamental reality that given proper training and opportunity blind people can do

what they would be able to do if they were not blind? Or have we, by not living the role of responsible library borrowers—not sending in requests—not getting books back on time—not fetching and carrying when we should (and could fetch and carry) demonstrated that we wanted equality of treatment for things we are *receiving* but not for things we are *giving*?

A society deserves the progress made in each institution—libraries among the rest. The libraries for the blind reflect the upward movement of the blind. More books can go to more people *now* than when the program began. More staff members *now* are trained and educated for their positions. There is vastly more prestige associated with the “Books for the Blind” *now*. But all of this falls so far short of what should be—could be—*must be*!

Libraries mean so much to so many blind people—they can (and should) mean so much more as they improve. As societies deserve the criminals they breed—the bad guys—they also deserve the angels they develop—the good guys. We deserve our institutions—our libraries—they are pretty sad now and we are responsible for that! (Another speech could be written on what kind of library staff deserves the borrowers that now prevail.) But let us become responsible, aggressive consumers! Let us *make* our libraries better. □

LIBRARY SERVICES FOR THE BLIND AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED:  
COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT, BRAILLE TECHNOLOGY,  
AND A VIEW FOR THE FUTURE

BY

FRANK KURT CYLKE

*Chief, Division for the Blind and  
Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress*

President JERNIGAN. Last year at this Convention we expressed our concern and did so in very direct terms concerning Mr. Cylke, and this year, I think it's only fair to make these remarks: Mr. Cylke has, during the past year, worked very cooperatively with our Federation. As a matter of fact, after last year's Convention, in all good temper he set about having discussion and dialogue with us. The remarks which were made on the Convention floor were taken by him in the spirit that they were meant. He did not go away or sulk or act insulted that we expressed our view to him. Quite the contrary, Mr. Cylke has taken every opportunity during this year to extend courteous treatment to us, but also hold meaningful discussion concerning library matters and developments. Just as we expressed concern last year, we express this year gratification that that has been the case, and I think that working with Mr. Cylke has been productive and has been helpful to blind persons during the year. The topic of Mr. Cylke's discussion this morning is library services for the blind and physically handicapped: collection development, Braille technology, and a view for the future. Mr. Cylke, we welcome you to the Convention. Here's Mr. Cylke. [Applause.]

Mr. CYLKE. Thank you, Mr. Jernigan. I do appreciate the remarks you just made, and I would like to reiterate, as I have last year and the year before, that I do have a special feeling for the National Federation

of the Blind and I plan to work as closely as I can with you all for as long as I am in a position to affect library services or any other aspect of the work that's appropriate. Before I go into my formal prepared remarks, I would like to say just a few words.

I look back on a very special relationship with Florence Shropshire, who we consider one of the finest librarians, and I won't say librarians for the blind and physically handicapped, I include all librarians in that, in the United States. [Applause.] Already we have been able to develop a very close working relationship with Mr. Duane Gerstenberger, who has followed her at the Iowa Commission, and we look forward to many, many years of working with Duane.

Now, this has been a long week for us. Jackie Wintel, my Assistant Chief, the Assistant Chief of the Division, came out on Sunday morning, and I came out on Sunday evening, and we've been here in the exhibit hall and talking to individuals and to groups through the week. We spoke to the student group on Monday evening, and I know that they will have some more questions from the floor, today, but we look forward to them. We had some conversations with special delegations, one from the Nebraska delegation to this Convention, where there are specific problems, and I will assure them, and I want to take this specific opportunity to assure them, that

we can work out the situation to our mutual satisfaction. We have talked with Florida representatives; and I am just trying to make the point that the week has been a long week; in a way it's been a hard week. You work us harder than most conventions, but we've enjoyed it. [Applause.]

In talking with Mr. Jernigan, prior to coming out, we did identify areas such as collection development, Braille, and some new technological developments as areas that you might want to be brought up to date on. As Mrs. Shropshire noted, we always get significant comments about the books that we put into the collection. They are both positive and they are negative. Some people, as Florence pointed out, enjoy a good racy novel. There are others who can't stand good racy novels and want nice, peaceful, happy-ending stories. We get heavy correspondence. During the last year the Division responded to ten thousand specific letters, and I would say that more than sixty percent of those letters addressed the collection. But let me tell you how we build the collection and then you might have a better feel about how you can participate.

Basically what we do is have a group of three individuals coordinate an effort which is designed to have books which are useful to you, as consumers and readers, in the collection and available for your perusal when you want them. Now the problem is, how do we talk to 500,000 individuals? Obviously, we can't. However, we can talk through consumer groups and to that point we set up an ad hoc advisory committee to advise us on collection development. Two years ago, when the group first met, Florence Shropshire and Peggy Pinder represented the National Federation of the Blind. This year Florence Shropshire came again. What this group did, together with

the staff of the Division for the Blind, was to sit down and identify areas where specific concerns might be addressed, where we should build our collection. For example, one area is that of science. Now you've heard the student group talking about the problems of science training. Science is a rapidly changing area where books have to be added on a continuing basis to make sure that they are in current supply and updated. As a result of the recommendations of Florence Shropshire and others, we are putting a specific effort this year into buying more and more science books. We are buying more of others as well. Now, after this group, which is made up of librarians and consumers, has decided what area we should address, the book selection group attempts to select the books with help from the Division staff. They use the various tools which are known to librarians, those which announce the books in advance, best seller lists in various areas, and so forth. Areas of consideration for any specific book are basically these, and there are six: To which group or groups will this particular title appeal; will this title meet a specific need, either educational, recreational, or informational; will this title meet not only current needs but future reading requirements; will this title attract new readers, will a person who is not using the program be caused to become part of the program as a result of knowing that the book is available. What would the demand be? Should it be produced as a cassette, as a talking book; should it be produced in a limited manner by a Regional library. And was this title suggested by a librarian, or a reader, or by someone else, and where did they get their information—in other words, was it from a review or a personal recommendation.

Now I am not going to say that we're not making mistakes. I couldn't say that.

But I could say that we are putting our best efforts into working with you through your organization and with you as individuals, if you choose to write to us and to identify specific titles, to select the books which you want.

Now, let me just say a few words about Braille. And I find that every time I speak I should make this statement: that the Library of Congress has had a long, continuing interest in Braille, and we have an interest in continuing this process and in producing more Braille books and more magazines. There is no question about that. [Applause.] Jim Gashel, in his presentation the other day, mentioned that this year we requested funds from Congress for fifty more Braille titles, mass-produced titles, and we indicated a commitment at that point to request fifty more titles each year until we reached the level of five hundred titles which would be nearly double of where we were a few years back. I would say don't look at that five hundred as a maximum but as a realistic goal to shoot for and with the intermediate steps of fifty titles a year. With your help, which you have given unsolicited, we are sure that the Congress will be gracious enough to continue building this budget to permit that. And I should reemphasize again what Jim Gashel said the other day, that Dr. Daniel Boorstin, who is the Librarian of Congress recently appointed, made his personal commitment to the area of Braille, so that you have not only a commitment from the Division but you also have a commitment from the Librarian and you have a public statement on our part here at this Convention and you have statements before the financing committees, if you will, to indicate that we will continue and we will push ahead.

Now, we are working to develop at the same time as acquiring the money to produce in the same method, monies—or, excuse me, technologies—changes in technology, to produce books in a more efficient and effective manner and, hopefully, much more cheaply so that we could produce more. In other words, if it costs us less to produce a title, we could produce another title, perhaps, with the money saved by cumulating it over two or three. You mentioned earlier during this week—and I am sure that most of you have seen and listened to—the Kurzweil machine. And Dr. Kurzweil has developed a very interesting and very workable machine. And what you see is a machine which reads a print book and then comes out in voice. What you might not know about it, what we are having discussions with Dr. Kurzweil about right now, is that with a very minor modification that machine can come out in Grade II Braille. [Sounds of surprise, approbation, applause.] This is thanks to Dr. Kurzweil. I had absolutely nothing to do with the technology—the technology is his. But our conversations are this: we would like to acquire a Kurzweil machine, and we plan to, for two reasons: one for the audio; but, more important, for the Braille. Just think for a minute with me, that if in the main library of the Library of Congress—now, I'm not just talking about the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped—I'm talking about the main library, which is the largest print library in the world, you had one or more Kurzweil machines and these machines had the capability not only of giving you audio, but had the capability of giving you Grade II Braille. Now, the normal, sighted reader, when he approaches the Library of Congress, asks for a book, a page—a young man or a young woman—goes to the shelf and pulls that book off for him because they are stored in a remote location. He

then takes that book to a reading carrel and reads it. With the Kurzweil machine in Braille or in recorded form, the blind or the physically handicapped reader approaches the Library of Congress, asks for the book, has it delivered to him as the sighted counterpart does, and has it produced for himself right there, either in Braille or in sound. I think this is a great step forward [applause] and I think the point that we'll be making with this machine will not be just a token or tokenism, hopefully we will demonstrate its workability. At that point you can see Kurzweil machines coming down to a price where institutions can acquire them without too much financial strain and you can see universities around the United States or around the world having these machines. I know that there are some fellows here, and some women, that I met at the University of Minnesota earlier this year, and we were talking there about how to make the university archives accessible to the blind student. This is certainly a way that this could be done. Well, we won't go on into that, but we are working. Just one other word about Braille: We do have a request for proposal now out on the street and we have had responses to it, to develop techniques for lowering the costs of Braille production. We have pursued it to the point of having sent two staff members to Germany, one Braille consumer and one computer technician, to explore new Braille production techniques that are going on there. They are making efforts there. We have made our commitments for our three hundred titles this year; I know we'll make them next year.

Before I get into any other comments, I would like to announce what I am sure many of you know, but that on July 5 of

this year, the Library of Congress issued the *New York Times* large-print edition of their magazine in Braille. Now, what pleases me most about this is that a national newspaper which has been available to the sighted public—admittedly, it's a weekly compilation rather than a daily issue—but it is available at no cost to you. I heard from the office this morning that the July 5 issue of this newspaper was mailed on July 8. That, I think, is a very good turnaround. [Applause.] To the very few announcements that we've made so far, we have, as of today, 1,325 subscribers. We'd be delighted to double that number. If you're interested in reading the *New York Times*, if you're interested in receiving it on a weekly basis in Braille in your home, you can see me after this meeting or just drop us a line and we'll be delighted to put you on the mailing list.

Now, I talked a bit, and I don't want to talk too much longer because our time is growing close and I know that we do have some questions that will be asked from the audience, but what is the future? And I would simply say that the future hopefully holds the same as the past but more. We want to produce more books in recorded form, we want to produce more books in Braille form. We must have more money to do that, and we see the program growing and growing, both in quantity, in other words, in the number of titles, in the numbers of copies of books available to you, and also in quality, in that we can assure the uniform high quality of Braille, we can assure the uniform high quality of the recorded narration, and we can assure you that the cassette machines which you receive will not jam and spill. And at that day—well, we hope it's very soon. Thank you very much. [Applause.] □



## CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS: THEIR IMPACT ON THE BLIND

BY

LUIS A. ESCONTRIAS

*Director, California Client Assistance Program*

Early in 1972, the 92d Congress began reviewing the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. Hearings were held by the House Select Subcommittee on Education during the months of January and February of that year. During these hearings and the subsequent Senate hearings, it became clear that major changes were needed in the act in order to insure that the vocational rehabilitation program would better meet its goal of providing more comprehensive rehabilitation services for handicapped individuals.

Most prominent in these hearings was the testimony of witnesses that the vocational rehabilitation program was not reaching that section of the population who needed the services the most; that it was not reaching rehabilitable individuals with severe handicaps. These witnesses pointed out that the rehabilitation programs often served only those individuals who were easiest to serve and who, in fact, could be helped by only one referral. This practice obviously excluded from the service system many individuals who required a multi-service approach. The testimony, in addition, pointed up a serious lack of communication between the counselor and the client, and the inability of the average client truly to understand the maze of bureaucratic procedures in the program. The committee then recognized that many clients or client-applicants needed a way of having the system translated to them in terms they understood and, more importantly, to have the system understand their needs in the same type of translation.

After much deliberation and testimony, the client assistance method was agreed upon as a viable method in attempting to achieve these goals and was, in fact, endorsed by virtually every witness who appeared before the committee. The intent therefore, as noted, was to provide, in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, client assistance projects which would seek to resolve differences the clients were having within the program in as quick and amicable a manner as possible. Given this brief history on the development of the client assistance concept, allow me now to discuss California's version of the Client Assistance Program.

California's program was one of the first to be established in the United States. We began operation in July 1974. At that time, the State Department of Rehabilitation was directed by Alan Nelson, who provided us with the kind of flexibility that was so necessary in the development of the program during its first year. It should be noted that we were not only permitted, but encouraged, to establish a program which would address the crucial needs of our population. We accomplished this by developing our own proposal which outlined our target population, our goals, objectives, and the methodology to accomplish our mandate. We also initiated a research component which was designed to insure the proper gathering, storage, analysis of information by the Client Assistance Program. There were four goals in our initial proposal: (1) to inform all clients and client applicants

within the project area, basically the Los Angeles basin, of all the benefits available under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; (2) to assist, upon request, clients and client applicants in their relationships with the program, and facilities providing services to them under the act; (3) to assist, again, upon request, clients and client applicants in their relationships with the Federal, State, and local agencies affecting their rehabilitation programs. In this case we mean, of course, the Social Security Administration, the Department of Public Social Services, et cetera; (4) to identify problem areas in the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services to clients and to recommend methods and means of improving the Department's performance.

Aside from the programmatic goals, California's Client Assistance Program made a decision initially to operate with certain basic principles in mind. These principles were developed to govern our everyday activities, and are truly the basis of our existence. They are that: (1) The rehabilitation system must be made to work *for* the client and not on the client or at the client. (2) Each and every client or client applicant will receive the best representation possible in securing the rights and benefits entitled to him under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. (3) The limitations imposed upon the client are not in fact the result of the "disability," but are a direct result of how others perceive that disability. (4) The aspirations and goals of our clients vary in scope and nature as do the aspirations, goals, and values of other constituents. (5) The Client Assistance Program, when faced with the question of being either an extension of the Department of Rehabilitation or the advocate of our constituency, will without doubt or hesitancy be firm in our position as advocates of the constitu-

ency which we have been mandated to serve.

In describing our goals and objectives, as well as the principles by which we are governed, the program, indeed, sounds impressive. However, we all know of many programs which have sounded or looked impressive on paper or as proposals but that their success has, in far too many cases, ended there. California's client assistance staff has been committed to this not being the case with our program. We began by advising people not to merely listen to our words but to wait and judge our program by its actions.

As noted earlier, Alan Nelson provided CAP with tremendous encouragement. However, notwithstanding this cooperative attitude, CAP was faced with constant opposition and negativism from many within the Department of Rehabilitation. Nothing constructive can be accomplished by further elaboration of these problems, and it is sufficient only to note that the first recommendation contained in our first evaluation by the Program Evaluation Section of the Department of Rehabilitation states: "Project staff shall be commended for the excellent progress and level of production they have achieved to date, especially the obstacles they have had to overcome to achieve their present level of development." What was this progress that was noted in the evaluation? Well, it was based on the fact that CAP had provided presentations to over 1,500 individuals on client advocacy, and on the rights and benefits to which they were entitled under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These presentations involved thirty-nine grass-roots organizations, as well as ten local community colleges that had handicapped student organizations on campus. CAP also repre-

sented forty-seven clients with problems concerning other governmental agencies, SSI, and SSDI cases. In addition, it provided, through personal one-to-one interviews, advice to 101 clients and actively represented them in their dealings with the Department of Rehabilitation. At the close of CAP's first year, we were unsuccessful in only 4.61% of the cases we represented.

Although briefly noted earlier, we should emphasize that in addition to our direct services to clients, we also conducted in-depth research into areas of conflict faced by our clients. This was initiated to be sure that, should our funding be exhausted and the program become inoperative, we would, in addition to assisting clients back into the rehabilitation process, also leave documentation that would provide data to the Department in its attempt to delete certain problem areas. This research was divided into three conflict areas: (1) client-Department of Rehabilitation staff; (2) client-administrative structure; (3) client-other agency. Our findings at the end of the first year indicated that 60% of the client problems involved Department of Rehabilitation staff, with 13% involving the administrative structure, and 20% involving other governmental agencies. In 45% of our cases the causes were identified as staff or departmental insensitivity towards specific handicaps as they relate to the employment market; and lack of good judgment in predicting individuals' capabilities as they relate to specific job junctions. Twenty-one percent were identified as lack of communication between client and staff.

In addition to the twelve pages of statistical data, CAP also provided the Department seven pages outlining specific conflict areas and recommendations to the Department. In its first year, CAP was also instru-

mental in initiating institutional changes, one of which involved the Business Enterprise Program. Article 3, Section 4720 of California's Business Enterprise Regulations stated that: "In the event of marriage of one licensee to another, the two licensees may choose which license should be terminated." Quite frankly, initially we didn't quite understand which license they were talking about—marriage or the BEP. In any event, we thought it was big of the State to offer this alternative. This was clearly discriminatory. Can you just imagine the American Medical Association, or the American Bar Association stating that there will be only one physician or one attorney in a family? Well, that's precisely what the BEP regulation stated. CAP presented this issue to the Department's legal counsel and as a result the regulation is no longer on the books in the State of California.

In June of 1975, the Rehabilitation Services Administration conducted an on-site visit to CAP. Les Cole from Washington, D.C., Dirk Schurmann and John Kissinger from the Regional Office of San Francisco, comprised the review team. Subsequent to the review, the Federal team advised us on that very day that they would award all the funds still available for the purpose in Federal Region IX to California's Client Assistance Program. This was based on our plans to expand and their recognition of the effectiveness of the program in addressing the problems and needs of our clients.

We then began our second year of operation with \$145,000, and later were awarded an additional \$7,000 for a total of \$152,000. To date, we have directly represented 326 clients and we have a client satisfaction ratio of 87%. We have operated, for all practical purposes, throughout the entire State of California notwithstanding the fact

that our budget was designed to deal only with the greater Los Angeles basin. Our position has been not to deny or refuse our services to anyone in need of them. We have worked with 39 Department of Rehabilitation offices, 131 rehabilitation counselors, and have had clients referred from more than 132 governmental or community agencies outside the Department of Rehabilitation. Our findings to date indicate that 47% of our clients have conflicts with Department of Rehabilitation staff, 22% with agencies teamed with the Department of Rehabilitation administration. Our case load has shifted dramatically with clients with visual impairments increasing 6.3 times over the figures of nine months earlier. I somewhat suspect that the NFB may have had something to do with this. The statistics further indicate that in 89% of the client-staff conflict areas, the problem is either a misrepresentation of laws or regulations, a personality conflict, a lack of communication, discrimination, or just plain lack of Department of Rehabilitation staff competence.

Perhaps it is appropriate at this point to describe a case which is not unique but which merely reflects the kinds of situations we are faced with on a daily basis. The case involved a client who came to us subsequent to retaining an attorney on a Supplemental Security Income claim. He was totally dissatisfied with the lack of professionalism and the countless delays by the attorney in presenting his case and requested that CAP assist him in expediting his claim and requested representation at the fair hearing. It is interesting that the attorney did not procrastinate at all in stating that his fee would constitute twenty-five percent of the total settlement. A client advisor was assigned to the case. Upon investigation it was found that the Social Security Admin-

istration had acted upon the findings of the State's Disability Evaluation Branch. Upon further investigation it was discovered that DEB had itself based its evaluation on insufficient and, in point of fact, outdated medical information. The client advisor then spent the time necessary to acquire the medical exhibits to establish blindness as the client's disability. Two interesting situations surfaced during the course of this case: one was that we found that the decision had not been based on whether the individual was blind according to the law, but rather on the Social Security Administration's claims representative's preoccupation with the physiological basis for the blindness. In other words, the claims representative believed the individual to be blind, but did not believe the cause of the blindness and, as such, rejected the claim of our client. It's incredible. The second situation which arose in this case concerned our own client advisor who represented the client at the hearing. Upon arriving and requesting the Social Security folder, our advisor was questioned by SSI personnel—at this point it seems I want to say SS personnel—[laughter] as to his competency to adequately represent the client. The question presented to our advisor was, "How can you properly represent the client if you can't review the evidence? You are blind, aren't you?" Well, the "you are blind, aren't you" client advisor then proceeded to represent the client and secured a judgment on his behalf in the amount of \$9,386. [Applause.] And he didn't even ask for twenty-five percent.

Along with direct services and research activities, CAP has also been successful in assisting to mobilize certain communities to the point where they then can assume their own advocacy, and demand the services and/or treatment to which they are entitled. In cases like this it has been inter-

esting, because I am sure that those in "power" have damned the very day that they ever gave reason for the mobilization of these groups. As a good friend of mine so often says: "The ways of the Lord are manifold." That they really are, as the events of recent days can attest to.

This brings me to my final point of the day. Many of you have been involved in situations where you take a position which you not only feel is right for yourself as an individual but also for those whom you feel you are representing. In taking this position you find, upon looking around, that no one is backing you. You continue with your position and the battle turns, and as the battle turns you suddenly have a large contingent of supporters behind you. But mind you, only if there is indication that the battle will turn in your favor.

Well, an interesting thing happened to us on the way to the office the other day. We found ourselves out on the old proverbial limb but before we could even turn around

to see if there was support, the support ran past us, around us, over us, in the rush to the front lines to assist us. [Applause.] Mr. President, they not only manned the barricades, they carried the barricades to the steps of the Capitol. [Cheers and applause.] The California Association of the Deaf was there; the Greater Los Angeles Council of the Deaf was there; and, of course, the National Federation of the Blind was there. [Applause.] In addition to other activities, there are many of you here today who took the time to write on our behalf and many of you even went to Sacramento and spoke to the legislators on our behalf. The staff and I wish we could thank you personally but if that not be possible, please accept now our humblest—and this is a word that we have been accused of seldom using—please accept our humblest gratitude for what you've done.

Dr. tenBroek, your trumpet was heard and it never sounded retreat. You were there, Lord knows, you were there. Thank you. Glory, Glory, Federation. □



## MUSEUMS AND THE BLIND: A LOOK AHEAD

BY

HAROLD SNIDER

*Coordinator, Programs for the Handicapped,  
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Good morning, fellow Federationists. It is indeed a pleasure to be here. I think it may be in order to say here that the General Services Administration of the Federal Government should charter an aircraft to take all these Federal officials back and forth who seem to be coming here. I think it shows some real power on behalf of the Federation.

Those of you who do not know anything about the Smithsonian Institution—we are your group of museums on the Capitol Mall in Washington. We are also a research institution. I have been coordinator of programs for handicapped at the Smithsonian Institution since last September. But I have been a member of the National Federation of the Blind for almost ten years. Maybe this information will give you some idea both as to my allegiance to the movement and my priorities in my work. I am speaking to you today both as a fellow Federationist and as a Federal official but not that kind of Federal official who comes to bend your ear about all those supposedly wonderful things we are doing for the blind. I am, however, someone who is deeply involved in breaking down the barriers of prejudice that have been imposed for so long on blind museum-goers.

Before we can look at where we are going in the months and years ahead, we must examine briefly where we've been and we must also take a look at the present state of the art of museum visiting by the blind.

Ten years ago I was literally thrown out of one of the Smithsonian's museums and I was told, and I quote, "There is nothing for you to touch or listen to here, and besides, what makes you think we would let a blind person loose in our museum." Six months later, after support from the NFB and from Members of Congress, I did get a very special tour of that museum and I am proud to tell you that I kept those museum employees there until 1:30 in the morning. [Cheers and applause.] Naturally the tour did not take place during normal museum hours because the staff were afraid of what the public might say about seeing a blind person wandering around *their* museum. Now that I work for the Smithsonian, things are very, very different, indeed.

At our last National Convention in Chicago, several Federationists were thrown out of the Chicago Art Institute, and only after vigorous protest and a small demonstration were we given a tour. I believe that we gave that museum a real education in Federationism because our members from Chicago now tell me that things are a little bit better there. At this Convention, some of us have enjoyed excellent tours, notably of the California Museum of Science and Industry and at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History. There are some officials of those museums in the audience with us this morning and they deserve a round of applause. But on the other hand, Perry Sundquist and the California host affiliate think this Convention

should know that the assistant director of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art said to me that blind visitors would not be welcome in his museum and that a tour would not be provided. I am sure that our host affiliate will know what to do with this one.

After assuming my present duties with the Smithsonian, I called upon a random group of Federationists for their view on museums and the blind. What I heard from them came as no surprise. It was clear that the rejection factor in museum visiting is just like that in trying to get a hotel room, get on a plane, or get a job. They are still trying to keep us out. The advice given to me by other Federationists was to make Federation philosophy the cornerstone of museum programs at the Smithsonian and to publicize what a blind person could expect from a museum and what a museum could expect from a blind visitor. Occasionally I have had some really good experiences with a museum, particularly while I was a student at Oxford. My visits to the British Museum in London were memorable because I was treated as a welcome visitor and not as a blind freak.

This brings me to the main point about the state of the art of museum programs for the blind, which is that it is not so important to concentrate on the kind and amount of special gimmicks and gadgets that could be provided for the use of the blind visitor segregated from the public. What is important is that the museum personnel must have a positive attitude which will enable them to do their level best to give every blind visitor a meaningful museum experience. The gimmicks, the gadgets, like the canes and dogs and blind bowlers which the press always loves to see, are only peripheral additions to the museum

experience. If the attitude of the staff is right, then the visit will be meaningful. I am convinced that the Smithsonian Institution will have successful programs for blind visitors because the staff, from the Secretary downwards, want to work with the NFB rather than with the Foundation, the rehabilitation agencies, or their loyal stooges, the ACB. [Cheers and applause.] The Smithsonian Institution wants you to know that in their eyes, the National Federation of the Blind does, indeed, represent all blind Americans. [Cheers and applause.] Therefore, Federationists are the people to which all museums ultimately must be responsive in formulating programs for blind visitors.

Over the past few months the NFB and the Smithsonian have cooperated closely on formulation of programs. The Smithsonian has purchased the Federation film "The Blind: An Emerging Minority" and uses that film, Federation literature, and Federation speakers to teach the right attitudes about blindness to their staff and volunteers. Jim Gashel and Big John McCraw and others have been of enormous help. [Laughter.] Federationists have advised on the first Braille and recorded literature to be distributed by the Smithsonian. I am privileged to be the first blind employee of the Smithsonian, as well as a member of the NFB. [Applause.]

Now here's something exciting. The model program for blind visitors to the Smithsonian is in the brand new National Air and Space Museum which opened just last week. In that museum blind visitors can appreciate one hundred percent of the exhibits in all twenty-four galleries either by touch or by the use of alternative techniques. These include cassette tours, raised line drawings, models, and literature in

Braille, on tape, or in large print. These techniques can all be used in galleries without the blind visitors being separated from the rest of the public. [Cheers.] We have made as many exhibits as possible as touchable as possible. A piece of genuine moon-rock plus many of the spacecraft and aircraft are among the touchable exhibits. These exhibits can be touched not only by the blind but by anyone else who wants to touch them. However, true perspective cannot be gained when touching very large objects, so models and raised line drawings help to bridge the gap. There are no special tours or special exhibits for the blind. We leave those to the Foundation. They can have them. [Cheers and applause.] This model program will shortly be expanded to include all the others within the museum. When you come to Washington within the next few months, you will really be able to see something.

Much valuable literature about the Smithsonian is now available. The very latest edition of the official guide to the Smithsonian can be obtained from our museum shops either in Braille or on cassettes, for exactly the same price as the print edition, namely, two dollars. We are able to sell these books without subsidy of any kind. Guidebooks for specific museums, either in Braille or on tape, will be available later this year. The National Air and Space Museum brochure is available free of charge in Braille, on tape, or in large print, just like the regular print edition, which is free to the public. The Smithsonian Associates Newsletter is recorded on cassettes and may be borrowed monthly from your Regional library. The Smithsonian Magazine is expected to be available on cassette within the next couple of months. The Smithsonian

has been awarded a grant by the U.S. Bureau for the Handicapped, U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The purpose of the grant is to write guidelines for museum programs for handicapped children. By using the combined results of three surveys and the literature search, this information, applied with our own Federation philosophy, should permanently change the course of museum programs for the better. I am currently looking for two staff members to work with me on the grant, so those who wish to apply should write to me or see me while I am at the Convention as soon as possible.

Finally, it is vitally important to all of us that we should continue what we have begun. Together, the Smithsonian Institution and the National Federation of the Blind are changing the course of museum programs for the blind throughout the country. We are already working with several state affiliates to change museum attitudes in their states, namely, in North Carolina, with the North Carolina State Museum of Art; and in Philadelphia, with the Liberty Alliance of the Blind.

I now urge all Federationists to make sure that our philosophy becomes the cornerstone of all museum programs and I urge the Federation to oppose any Federal funding for museums which continue to discriminate against blind visitors. [Applause.] As a token of the change in the Smithsonian's museum program, I would like to present the very first Braille edition of the official guide to the Smithsonian to our national President. I look forward to seeing you all on the barricades of the Smithsonian. Thank you very much. [Applause.] □

RESOLUTIONS  
ADOPTED BY  
THE THIRTY-SIXTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF  
THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND  
*Los Angeles, California, July 1976*

RESOLUTION 76-A

WHEREAS the National Federation of the Blind has a long history of cooperation with and assistance to state rehabilitation agencies which conduct enlightened rehabilitation programs for the blind; and

WHEREAS, on June 3, 1976, a delegation representing the National Federation of the Blind of California met with the Director of the California Department of Rehabilitation in an effort to resolve some acute problems that have arisen during his administration; and

WHEREAS, at that meeting, said Director referred to the National Federation of the Blind of California as "the enemy," thus revealing his motives for (1) launching an investigation of the Orientation Center for the Blind in hostile secrecy; (2) abrogating the agreement between the Department of Rehabilitation, the California Legislature, and the organized blind which established the departmental position of Program Manager for the Blind and Partially Sighted with sufficient access to the Director to guarantee improvement in the rehabilitation program for the blind; (3) abrogating the agreement between the Department of Rehabilitation, the California Legislature, and the organized blind which led to meaningful consumer consultation through an active Advisory Committee on Services to the Blind and Partially Sighted; (4) appointing a long-time foe of the National Federation of the Blind of California as supervisor of statewide programs for the blind—which include the Program Manager and the Orientation Center for the Blind—a man who for years has demonstrated a total lack of understanding about blindness and blind people, and who has attempted to require National Accreditation Council (NAC) accreditation for California agencies for the blind, though he had full knowledge of the strong opposition of the organized blind to NAC; and (5) attempting to emasculate the California Client Assistance Program, which already has gained national recognition as the most effective advocacy program for disabled rehabilitation clients; and

WHEREAS, in his public statements to the National Federation of the Blind of California at its last convention, on April 30, 1976, the Director of the Department of Rehabilitation spoke long and eloquently of cooperation between his administration and the National Federation of the Blind of California but has yet to fit his deeds to his words: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization supports its California affiliate in its efforts to work amicably with the California Department of Rehabilitation; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if the California Department of Rehabilitation wishes to "wage war" upon the blind, this Federation pledges its full support to its California affiliate in meeting the challenge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be sent to Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., California Secretary of Health and Welfare Mario Obledo, the California Legislature, the California congressional delegation, officials of the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and the news media.

#### RESOLUTION 76-B

WHEREAS in recognition of the failure of rehabilitation agencies throughout the country to meet their responsibilities to their clients—a fact long articulated by the National Federation of the Blind—the United States Congress authorized and funded the establishment of Client Assistance Projects in the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and

WHEREAS the California Client Assistance Program as presently directed has more than achieved the effectiveness envisioned by Congress; and

WHEREAS, whether because of that success or in the face of it, the California Director of Rehabilitation has sought to emasculate the California Client Assistance Program by attempting to transform it into a captive program of the Department, thereby nullifying the intent of Congress; and

WHEREAS the National Federation of the Blind is in accord with the intent of Congress, and maintains that all Client Assistance Programs should be independent of rehabilitation bureaucrats: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization joins with its California affiliate in commending the California Client Assistance Program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Federation expresses its gratitude and commendation to the Honorable Mario Obledo, California Secretary of Health and Welfare, for his efforts to maintain the integrity of the California Client Assistance Program, thus demonstrating his genuine concern for the rights of the disabled; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be sent to Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., California Secretary of Health and Welfare Obledo, the California Legislature, the California congressional delegation, officials of the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and the news media.

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## RESOLUTION 76-01

WHEREAS, for many years, solely through the efforts of the National Federation of the Blind, the blind of this Nation have been attempting to secure the right for sheltered workshop employees to organize and to select a union to represent them for purposes of collective bargaining for persons who have no alternative to sheltered shop employment; and

WHEREAS, through the combined efforts of the National Federation of the Blind, Local 5050 of the Communications Workers of America AFL-CIO, and the employees of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, a Petition was filed with the Chicago Regional Office of the National Labor Relations Board requesting that the Board conduct an election among the employees of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind so that they might improve their deplorable wages and working conditions through collective bargaining; and

WHEREAS the Chicago Regional Director of the National Labor Relations Board followed long-standing Board policy and refused to assert jurisdiction over the Lighthouse; and

WHEREAS, upon the appeal to the Board in Washington by the National Federation of the Blind, the Board reversed long-standing policy and asserted jurisdiction over sheltered shops in a landmark decision so that sheltered shop employees will now have the same federally protected rights and privileges to unionize which have been available for many years to other citizens in our society: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July 1976 that this organization commends the employees of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind for their courage in going to the barricades to fight for their rights as American citizens—action which will help not only themselves but thousands of blind shop workers throughout this country; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization commends Local 5050 of the Communications Workers of America for joining with us to bring about this revolutionary change in Federal law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be sent to officials of the Communications Workers of America, and to each and every employee of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, commending them for their courage and urging them to vote “yes” in the forthcoming election; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization pledges itself to redouble its efforts to continue support of shop employees until conditions and wages in the shops are equal to those in competitive industry.

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**RESOLUTION 76-02**

WHEREAS blind parents having young drivers who are legally licensed to drive the family automobile find it necessary to pay substantially higher insurance rates than sighted parents; and

WHEREAS the insurance carriers claim that the youthful driver, when he is the only licensed driver of the family car of a blind parent or parents, will be considered the principal driver and user of the motor vehicle; and

WHEREAS the carriers assume that the youthful driver will be driving the car substantially more frequently than would a young adult licensed to drive and insured under the coverage of normally sighted parents: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that the officers of this Federation take all steps necessary to secure from insurance carriers results of studies bearing on the following questions: (1) Does a young driver of blind parents have greater than normal risk of accident and is there actuarial proof thereof; (2) Does the number of youthful drivers of parents not legally permitted to drive have a significant statistical bearing on the overall insurance rate of the entire category of youthful drivers; and (3) Is it possible that this category of youthful drivers of non-driving parents, because of their added responsibility, may also be safer drivers than the class as a whole.

**RESOLUTION 76-03**

WHEREAS ever since its inception the National Federation of the Blind has fought vigorously for the rights of blind Americans to travel abroad in the land by any mode of transport; and

WHEREAS recently an alarming trend has begun to occur in air travel in several areas; and

WHEREAS the airlines' practices described below are discriminatory, condescending, and demeaning for blind air travelers, namely:

(1) Some airlines now insist on taking away white canes from blind air travelers on board;

(2) Some airlines insist that blind persons using dog guides be restricted to sitting in bulk-head seats only;

(3) Blind persons are refused the right to sit in emergency exit rows;

(4) Blind persons are often required to be pre-boarded, whereas blind persons should be offered an option in this area;

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(5) Blind persons are often degraded by being required to wait to debark from planes until all other passengers have deplaned;

(6) Some airlines do not afford equal treatment to the blind—requiring separate security searches of the blind rather than permitting the blind to be searched alongside other citizens of our society;

(7) Some airport personnel demand that competent blind persons be transported within airports either by wheelchairs or golf carts, rather than permitting them to use ground service personnel, if needed.

These practices are obviously discriminatory and limit our rights as citizens: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization deplores and condemns this custodial treatment by airline personnel and the approbation of such treatment by the Federal Aviation Administration; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, on the question of equal treatment in security checks on the blind, the Civil Aeronautics Board be urged to mandate that the blind be subject to the same security check procedures as others, and not be segregated from other passengers because they are blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization directs its officers to take such necessary actions, including litigation, to insure that the rights of blind persons are protected as equals in our society.

#### RESOLUTION 76-04

WHEREAS one of the most important programs of the National Federation of the Blind is educating the public about the positive philosophy of blindness; that given proper training and positive attitudes, blindness can be reduced to the level of a mere nuisance; and

WHEREAS one facet of the NFB's public education program is the production and mass distribution of "What is the National Federation of the Blind?"—a leaflet describing NFB and its philosophy and objectives; and

WHEREAS another facet of the NFB's public education program is the production and distribution of various recorded materials; and

WHEREAS airlines place various printed materials aboard aircraft and often provide a variety of recorded selections for the benefit of their passengers: Now, therefore,

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BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization seek to have "What is the National Federation of the Blind?" routinely placed aboard all aircraft used for revenue service flights of domestic and international airlines operating in the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization work with said airlines to the end that appropriate recorded materials from the NFB are played on flights offering recordings.

#### RESOLUTION 76-05

WHEREAS it has come to the attention of this Federation that on occasion individuals are involuntarily committed to custodial institutions solely on the ground of their physical incapacity—usually blindness and/or deafness; and

WHEREAS such commitment is not only wasteful and immoral, but is a most flagrant deprivation of the human rights which are guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States; and

WHEREAS everywhere throughout the Nation there are Federal and state programs designed to assist blind and deaf-blind individuals in obtaining proper training, financial aid, and other means to adjust and to perform actively with benefit to society: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization instructs its officers to call this deplorable situation to the attention of the several appropriate Federal regulatory agencies, to the end that these agencies require the immediate cessation of the practice of involuntary commitment of individuals to custodial institutions on the sole ground of blindness and/or deafness; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each Federation affiliate take similar action at the state level with respect to state and local regulatory agencies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that when necessary, the Federation and each affiliate pledges to take whatever additional steps may be required to liberate the victims of this practice.

#### RESOLUTION 76-06

WHEREAS government agencies in general and workers with the blind in particular have only recently agreed upon a uniform definition of legal blindness—visual acuity not to exceed 20/200 in the better eye, with correction, or a field of vision which subtends an angle no greater than twenty degrees; and

WHEREAS this legal definition of blindness accurately reflects the point at which vision loss begins to require different methods for performing the tasks of daily living; and

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WHEREAS a study group associated with the World Health Organization has proposed to reclassify humanity on the basis of sight into such categories as normal, near normal, moderate low vision, severe low vision, moderate blindness, severe blindness, and total blindness; and

WHEREAS this reclassification is intended to be included in the *International Nomenclature of Ophthalmology* and the *International Classification of Diseases*; and

WHEREAS adoption of this reclassification by government and private agencies—for example, the Social Security Administration, the Veterans' Administration, and the various regional fundraising drives—would prove detrimental by causing reduction or even elimination of benefits to many blind individuals; and

WHEREAS the acceptance of this reclassification would certainly result in confusion, duplication, and fragmentation of services provided by agencies for the blind; and

WHEREAS this reclassification would divide our ranks on the basis of degrees of eyesight and would, in fact, ignore the real problem of public attitudes toward blindness by giving legal credence to existing misconceptions and prejudices: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization declares itself opposed to the World Health Organization reclassification, and that our officers are instructed to utilize all resources they deem appropriate to prevent the acceptance and dissemination of this reclassification.

#### RESOLUTION 76-07

WHEREAS the members of the National Federation of the Blind long have been involved in efforts to increase the employment opportunities for the blind; and

WHEREAS prospective employers often use the excuse of increased cost as a rationale for not hiring qualified blind persons; and

WHEREAS throughout the country telephone companies have begun charging for directory assistance calls both for residence and business telephones; and

WHEREAS telephone companies have refused to develop means whereby employers would not be charged for the directory assistance calls made by blind employees, although they have granted exemptions to residence or business telephones when it is determined that the phone line is used solely by a blind person; and

WHEREAS many blind persons are employed in occupations, such as real estate or sales work, that demand a constant use of directory assistance in order to perform the job; and

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WHEREAS such an added cost to employers will present an additional barrier to the employment opportunities of the blind inasmuch as employers will be forced to bear the cost for directory assistance calls when a blind person cannot use a single designated phone line; and

WHEREAS such policies constitute unequal treatment and discrimination against the blind in employment: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization take all necessary action to see that telephone companies develop systems so that employers will not be charged for the directory assistance calls which are made by their blind employees; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization reaffirms its position that all telephone companies charging for directory assistance calls grant residence and business phone exemptions to the blind in all cases.

#### RESOLUTION 76-08

WHEREAS Section 904 of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Public Law 92-318) prohibits discrimination against the blind in all higher education programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance; and

WHEREAS Section 904 was adopted by the Congress specifically to protect blind college and university students and to insure their full participation in higher education programs on terms of equality with the sighted; and

WHEREAS the Office for Civil Rights in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has promulgated regulations implementing those sections of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities, but in doing so has specifically excluded Section 904, choosing not to implement it and thus ignoring the will of the Congress; and

WHEREAS this deliberate exclusion of the blind from the protection afforded to others through complaint procedures and compliance investigations amply demonstrates the unwillingness and outright refusal of responsible Federal officials to serve as advocates for equal opportunity for the blind, or to recognize the capacity of the blind to compete with the sighted on terms of equality; and

WHEREAS the Office for Civil Rights in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare bears the responsibility for enforcing all civil rights legislation adopted by the Congress affecting HEW programs and does not have the legal option of deciding to ignore the will of the Congress clearly expressed in the adoption of Section 904: Now, therefore,

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- BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization expresses its outrage and indignation to the Office for Civil Rights in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare for its flagrant violation of specific legislation adopted by the Congress to protect equal rights and opportunities for the blind; and
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Federation calls upon the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office for Civil Rights, to carry out its duty of enforcing Federal law by promulgating appropriate regulations which insure that blind students will be afforded full and equal opportunity in all higher education programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance; and
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers of this Federation take all steps necessary to secure full enforcement of Section 904—including informing the press and the public of the provisions of this Act and the non-enforcement by those officials responsible for its administration, presenting testimony in congressional oversight hearings, and instituting litigation in the Federal courts.

#### RESOLUTION 76-09

- WHEREAS Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, provides that “no otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance”; and
- WHEREAS the President has issued Executive Order 11914, directing the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to coordinate the implementation of Section 504 by establishing standards for determining who are handicapped individuals and by setting guidelines for determining what are discriminatory practices within the meaning of Section 504; and
- WHEREAS, in accordance with Executive Order 11914, the Office for Civil Rights in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare is developing regulations to implement Section 504, having published a notice of key issues and draft regulations in the *Federal Register* of May 17, 1976; and
- WHEREAS the Office for Civil Rights proposes to adopt regulations which emphasize “different treatment” of handicapped individuals, stating for example that in admitting handicapped students to higher education programs, a university may “apply criteria for the admission of handicapped persons which differ from the criteria applied to nonhandicapped persons where such criteria are useful as predictors of completion of the education program or activity in question or of success in the occupation or profession for which the education program is designed to prepare students”; and
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WHEREAS this approach which requires separate but comparable (not even necessarily equal) treatment flies in the face of our constitutional guarantees of equal rights and equal protection under the law; and

WHEREAS, if promulgated, these draft regulations would have a particularly adverse impact on blind citizens who ask for and require nothing more than an equal opportunity to work and learn along with those who can see; and

WHEREAS the inevitable effect of these regulations would be approval of practices which are even more discriminatory, thus robbing the blind of their right to treatment as first-class citizens and placing them forever in the class of dependents, an action rendered even more incomprehensible since it is taken during our Nation's bicentennial celebration of independence: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this sixth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization condemns and deplores the outmoded thinking and unenlightened policies of the Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of this organization take all steps which he deems necessary (including litigation) to insure that regulations which are promulgated to implement Section 504 will afford the blind of America the opportunity to exercise to the maximum their constitutional rights of equal justice and full participation.

#### RESOLUTION 76-10

WHEREAS the United States Department of Labor has promulgated regulations implementing Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which requires Government contractors and subcontractors to take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified handicapped individuals; and

WHEREAS this program is patterned after Executive Order 11246 and Executive Order 1147-A, both of which seek to provide equal employment opportunities for persons denied employment because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; and

WHEREAS a key element in the administration and operation of this Executive order program is the requirement that Government contractors conduct utilization analyses and establish goals and timetables which they will follow as a means of remedying underutilization of persons previously denied employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; and

WHEREAS the regulations published by the Department of Labor implementing Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, are inconsistent with this approach since no goals are required and no timetables are to be met for the employment and advancement in employment of qualified handicapped individuals; and

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WHEREAS, by electing to omit goals and timetable requirements from the Section 503 regulations, the Department of Labor has failed to recognize that the blind, if given the opportunity, can compete on terms of equality in the labor force, and has placed the blind at a distinct disadvantage when they approach prospective employers who are obligated to meet more specific commitments by a particular time; and

WHEREAS the general presumption that all handicapped individuals are so severely disabled physically that it would be unreasonable and burdensome to require employers to seek them out and establish timetables for hiring them discriminates against the blind since it assigns them a second-class status in the labor force as they seek to compete on terms of equality; and

WHEREAS the regulations implementing Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, should be promulgated in a manner which fully recognizes the real capacities, abilities, and differences of the various disability groups; programs should be established to meet the real needs of people; people should not be simply plugged into programs for administrative convenience: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization calls upon the United States Department of Labor to require Government contractors and subcontractors to establish goals and timetables for hiring the blind as a part of their obligations to employ and advance in employment qualified handicapped individuals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers of this organization do all in their power to secure necessary amendments to the regulations implementing Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

#### RESOLUTION 76-II

WHEREAS, in the second session of the 94th Congress, Congressman Edward Koch introduced H.R. 13527—a bill to provide equality for the handicapped in employment; and

WHEREAS H.R. 13527 has been referred jointly to the Committee on Education and Labor and the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service of the United States House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS H.R. 13527 would create enforcement procedures to strengthen Sections 501, 503, and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, by establishing arbitration panels to resolve complaints of handicapped individuals; and

WHEREAS the present lack of clear enforcement mechanisms constitutes a crippling deficiency in the affirmative action and non-discrimination provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended: Now, therefore,

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BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization voices its vigorous endorsement of H.R. 13527 and the principles embodied therein; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization calls upon the appropriate committees of the Congress to hold hearings and otherwise to act swiftly to approve this legislation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that when such hearings are held the views of this organization be made known through supporting testimony so that H.R. 13527 can be enacted into law.

#### RESOLUTION 76-12

WHEREAS the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, requires the states to designate a specific organizational unit to be responsible for delivering vocational rehabilitation services to disabled individuals or, at the state's option, to establish a separate organizational unit for providing services to the blind; and

WHEREAS in several states there are plans currently afoot to reorganize state government in a manner which would submerge the vocational rehabilitation agencies and/or the agencies for the blind within larger bureaucratic structures, thus robbing them of policy-making authority and program integrity; and

WHEREAS the conclusions of the Mallas Report (a comprehensive and detailed study of service delivery systems to the blind) show beyond doubt that programs administered by specialized agencies for the blind are far superior to programs for the blind administered by general or umbrella agencies; and

WHEREAS S. 3034, introduced by Senator Robert Stafford, would permit "experimental delivery systems" completely waiving in selected cases the "sole state agency" requirement currently in the Rehabilitation Act; and

WHEREAS, if adopted, S. 3034 would seriously threaten those services to the blind which are now provided by separate or somewhat independent agencies: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization registers its vigorous opposition to S. 3034 or any other proposals which would waive the "sole state agency" requirement in the Rehabilitation Act and permit larger umbrella structures to replace more responsive service delivery systems which now exist in some states; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all state affiliates of this organization continue to be vigilant and ready to take action in the event of wholesale state reorganization plans which would adversely affect services for the blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers of this organization work with the appropriate committees of the Congress and responsible Federal officials in the Executive Branch to insure that the effectiveness of the separate agency concept be fully recognized and the integrity of separate programs for the blind be maintained.

#### RESOLUTION 76-13

WHEREAS a library for the blind can enrich all other departments of an agency for the blind and in turn be enriched by these same departments; and

WHEREAS the increased consumer input engendered by locating the library for the blind within an agency for the blind can stimulate the library toward growth and improvement of services to meet the rehabilitation, education, and other needs of clients; and

WHEREAS the library staff is more likely to understand the problems of blindness and appreciate the real needs of blind library users if the library is located within an agency for the blind; and

WHEREAS the library for the blind is more likely to achieve proper status and funding if it is operated as part of a comprehensive services-for-the-blind program; and

WHEREAS, in draft library guidelines prepared by the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped of the Library of Congress in cooperation with regional librarians for the blind and physically handicapped, it is proposed that libraries for the blind be placed in library settings, thus ignoring all of the advantages of having libraries be part of a total services-for-the-blind program: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization goes on record as affirming the policy that libraries for the blind should be established and operated as a part of comprehensive services to the blind provided by state agencies for the blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization strongly opposes any library standard which would require or encourage libraries for the blind to operate as a part of general library programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers of this organization take all steps necessary to secure broad acceptance of the concept that libraries serving the blind more properly belong in agencies for the blind than in general library programs.

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## RESOLUTION 76-14

WHEREAS, on October 9, 1975, the Social Security Administration ruled that if a claimant for Supplemental Security Income benefits, who disagrees with a proposed action on his claim, notifies the Social Security Administration within ten days that he intends to appeal the decision, the action will not take effect during the reconsideration and hearing process; and

WHEREAS imposing this ten-day rule does not afford proper due notice to blind SSI claimants who may not have daily access to reader services, and is thus an unreasonable restriction; and

WHEREAS procedures of the Social Security Administration currently allow the action to become effective at the time the notice is issued, rather than delaying it until the expiration of the ten-day period, thus adversely affecting SSI recipients who disagree with an administrative decision and who rely on uninterrupted receipt of benefits to which they are entitled; and

WHEREAS, subsequent to the issuance of the October 9, 1975, ruling by the Social Security Administration, the Congress liberalized the SSI appeal time period by amending Section 1631(c) of the Social Security Act, extending from thirty to sixty days the period during which appeals may be filed; and

WHEREAS the ten-day rule and present administrative procedures are inconsistent with the Supreme Court's ruling in *Kelly v. Goldberg* which requires the continued payment of benefits during all stages of administrative appeals: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization urges the Social Security Administration to rescind the ten-day rule and adopt regulations which insure that proposed actions will not be taken if claimants who wish to appeal notify the Social Security Administration within a required sixty-day time period following receipt of written notice and that Supplemental Security Income benefits shall not be reduced or interrupted during the entire appeals process.

## RESOLUTION 76-15

WHEREAS, in the 94th Congress, Congressman James Corman has introduced H.R. 8911, a bill to amend Title XVI of the Social Security Act to make needed improvements in the program of Supplemental Security Income benefits; and

WHEREAS H.R. 8911 was approved by the Public Assistance Subcommittee of the Committee on Ways and Means and subsequently reported from the full committee to the House for its consideration; and

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WHEREAS, as reported from the House Committee on Ways and Means, H.R. 8911 recognizes the need for certain improvements in the SSI program and would, in fact, improve the program by providing to blind persons the opportunity to receive benefits on the basis of presumptive blindness, by considering as adults all blind or disabled recipients over age eighteen for the purpose of determining eligibility for SSI benefits or determining the amount of such benefits, and by altering somewhat the present provisions regarding the exclusion of the value of a home as a resource so that inflationary increases in property values will no longer operate to render SSI recipients ineligible for benefits which they have been receiving; and

WHEREAS these improvements are modest steps in the right direction and must be joined by other improvements such as total elimination of the consideration of the value of a home as a resource in determining eligibility for SSI benefits, and mandatory pass-along of Federal cost-of-living increases in the states which currently and may in the future supplement the SSI payments: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization expresses its support for H.R. 8911 while urging adoption of needed amendments which would significantly improve this legislation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers of this organization work with the Members and appropriate committees of the Congress to secure enactment of H.R. 8911 together with necessary and vital improvements.

#### RESOLUTION 76-16

WHEREAS the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC) has sought to perpetrate and perpetuate the myth that NAC accreditation is strictly a voluntary process, no purse strings or other onerous requirements attached; and

WHEREAS, despite its protestations to the contrary, NAC has maneuvered to gain a stranglehold on workshops for the blind by trying to entice them with cut-rate accreditation, and by using political contacts to persuade state agency directors to purchase services only from accredited shops; and

WHEREAS, in public oversight hearings held by the Subcommittee on the Handicapped, United States Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, NAC's plan for control of workshops was disclosed in proposals which would condition Federal funding to workshops on their seeking and achieving accreditation by 1980; and

WHEREAS a national sheltered workshop study conducted by Greenleigh Associates for the Rehabilitation Services Administration concluded that accreditation (as it presently functions) has failed to improve sheltered workshop programs; and

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WHEREAS workshops for the blind were found to be lagging behind general workshop facilities, particularly in their record of placing clients in private industry, having a placement rate of only seven percent annually: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization strongly opposes any and all legislation which would seek to condition Federal financial support to workshops on their NAC-accredited status; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers of this organization take all steps necessary to insure that workshops for the blind will not be coerced into seeking accreditation by NAC; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be sent to responsible Federal officials and appropriate committees of the Congress.

#### RESOLUTION 76-17

WHEREAS the Social Security Administration has adopted a commendable program to employ large numbers of blind persons as teleservice representatives; and

WHEREAS many blind persons are now successfully employed in these positions; and

WHEREAS the blind accepted for training as teleservice representatives are required to attend a thirteen-week pre-employment program without pay or the protection of sick leave and other fringe benefits, while sighted applicants are required to take only six weeks of training for which they are paid: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this Federation take such steps as are necessary and proper to rectify this injustice since the blind, like other citizens of this Nation, are entitled to equal pay for equal work.

#### RESOLUTION 76-18

WHEREAS sighted applicants for the position of Teleservice Representative for the Federal Civil Service Commission, the Social Security Administration, and the Internal Revenue Service are required to pass standard civil service examinations as a prerequisite to their employment in these positions; and

WHEREAS blind applicants are required to undergo precisely the same examinations and in addition meet other and irrelevant requirements relating to hygiene, daily living skills, and personal adjustment, et cetera; and

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WHEREAS such special testing is not only irrelevant and expensive but is harmful to the dignity and employment aspirations of prospective blind employees; and

WHEREAS this custodial approach to blind applicants and employees has added to the misconceptions within these agencies that the blind can perform only those entry-level jobs for which they were hired initially, thus virtually eliminating any opportunity for transfer or promotion: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization deprecates the unwise practices described in this Resolution and urges the Civil Service Commission to promulgate rules which will permit blind applicants to be examined and employed and promoted upon the same basis as are other individuals in accordance with standards applicable to all.

#### RESOLUTION 76-19

WHEREAS the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC) has increasingly lost the support of responsible leaders, agencies, and organizations in work with the blind, notable among which is the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind; and

WHEREAS NAC's very survival is inevitably dependent on broad professional and consumer acceptance of its accreditation standards and operating procedures; and

WHEREAS NAC attempts to halt and reverse the erosion of its power base through various political maneuvers aimed at creating at least the facade of broadly based support; and

WHEREAS the lowest form of NAC's unethical shenanigans is the creation of a front organization calling itself the Affiliated Leadership League of and for the Blind; and

WHEREAS prominent among the organizers of this Affiliated Leadership League are:

- (1) Louis Rives, Director, Arkansas Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and current NAC president;
  - (2) Richard W. Bleecker, executive director, NAC;
  - (3) Howard Hanson, Program Administrator, South Dakota Services to the Visually Impaired, and second vice president of NAC;
  - (4) Helen Worden, Executive Director, Rhode Island Association for the Blind, and chairman, Commission on Standards of NAC;
  - (5) William Coppage, Director, Virginia Commission for the Visually Handicapped, and NAC Board member;
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- (6) Roy Kumpe, Executive Director, Askansas Enterprises for the Blind, Inc., and NAC Board member;
- (7) Durward K. McDaniel, National Representative, American Council of the Blind, and NAC Board member;
- (8) Austin G. Scott, Executive Director, Dallas County Association for the Blind, and NAC Board member;
- (9) Wesley Sprague, Executive Director, New York Association for the Blind, and NAC Board member;
- (10) Loyal Eugene Apple, Executive Director, American Foundation for the Blind;

all of whom have vigorously opposed the efforts of the National Federation of the Blind and others to reform the accreditation process as it is presently constituted in NAC; and

WHEREAS the Affiliated Leadership League of and for the Blind holds itself out as a broadly representative organization which not only speaks for the blind but those who seek to serve them, while conveniently sidestepping the fact that the National Federation of the Blind is the most broadly representative body of the blind themselves serving as a vehicle through which the blind speak for themselves: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization condemns and deplores the unethical tactics and political chicanery now being employed by NAC and its dwindling number of adherents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization declares this last-ditch survival effort of NAC to be one more maneuver in a general plan which seeks to blunt the progress of the organized blind and forever repress the blind in a system of custodial care; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers and directors of this organization expose this latest ploy on the part of NAC and urge all who truly support the independent movement of the blind to join with us in rejecting these deplorable tactics.

#### RESOLUTION 76-20

WHEREAS Greyhound Lines, Inc., has established a "Helping Hand Service for the Handicapped," which allows handicapped persons to travel with a companion for the price of one ticket; and

WHEREAS, as a part of this "Helping Hand Service," Greyhound offers "first-on seating, reserving the front seats for handicapped individuals and their companions"; and

WHEREAS handicapped individuals traveling by Greyhound are expected to notify the terminal information clerk at least thirty minutes prior to their departure on Greyhound

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and to inform the clerk of their anticipated time of arrival at the terminal itself, as well as their general travel plans; and

WHEREAS extending the requirements and conditions of Greyhound's "Helping Hand Service" to the blind would be condescending, onerous, and insulting to persons accustomed to traveling about independently; and

WHEREAS it is the experience of the blind that services which begin by being optional soon become required, since it is easier to adopt standard operating procedures rather than train personnel to understand differences in the wishes and requirements of the public; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding that blind people have effectively demonstrated that blindness is no bar to travel, we know well that the "Helping Hand Service" is but a step away from requiring the blind to travel only when accompanied by an attendant: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization takes the position that blind travelers on Greyhound shall not be considered handicapped passengers for purposes of the "Helping Hand Service" and shall not be subjected to the requirements and conditions imposed on the handicapped for receiving such service; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers of this organization do all in their power to work with Greyhound officials, officials of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and others to make known this position and secure its acceptance so that blind travelers will not be impeded as they seek to use the public transit systems.

#### RESOLUTION 76-21

WHEREAS during the past quarter century the blind of the United States have made substantial strides toward the achievement of equality of opportunity in employment, although a number of major obstacles remain; and

WHEREAS a key element in this progress has been the ability of blind persons to cope with the environment as it is and with the demands of the competitive labor force; and

WHEREAS the trend toward architectural design for all citizens, emphasizing the removal of architectural barriers to the disabled, has in some cases been carried to a ridiculous and detrimental extreme; and

WHEREAS a pamphlet issued by the U.S. Civil Service Commission entitled "A Guide for Federal Agency Coordinators in Selective Placement of the Handicapped" represents

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an example of the ridiculous by stipulating that restroom doors for women should be painted pink and those for men should be painted blue, that sidewalks in front of buildings should have corrugations and texture/color change which signal approaches to buildings and that such corrugations shall consist of grooves across walkways approximately one-half inch deep, one-half inch wide, and two inches apart, with the texture/color change being provided by painting with highway stripping paint that is noticeably less abrasive than the pavement in order to provide dark color inside grooves and light color surface between grooves; and

WHEREAS this same pamphlet stipulates that knurled door handles and doorknobs be provided for doors that are not intended for use under normal conditions, that audible signals be provided for elevators, and that other costly and unnecessary modifications be made to existing or newly constructed facilities; and

WHEREAS these costly and time-consuming modifications are likely to result in substantial reduction in the employment opportunities available to blind persons; and

WHEREAS the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, through the state departments of health and other facility-licensing bodies, has commenced requiring adherence to accessibility specifications promulgated by the American National Standards Institute; and

WHEREAS the American National Standards Institute is currently revising its specifications for making buildings and facilities accessible and usable by the physically handicapped: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization calls upon the United States Civil Service Commission and all other Federal agencies and departments to eliminate the misunderstandings and harmful effects of publications such as the aforementioned; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare together with the various state licensing bodies are urged to review carefully the building modifications required of facilities whose residents may be eligible for Medicare or Medicaid coverage in order to establish inexpensive, relevant standards which meet real, rather than imagined, needs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the American National Standards Institute is hereby urged to review with the organized blind those design specifications which affect the lives and livelihoods of blind individuals.

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## RESOLUTION 76-22

WHEREAS, in accordance with Public Law 93-516, the President has called a White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals; and

WHEREAS conferences will be held in each state prior to the National White House Conference which is now scheduled for May 25-29, 1977, in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS up to this point in the plans and preparations for the White House Conference there has been a tendency to consider the handicapped as a homogeneous class and a corresponding failure to demonstrate an appreciation of the variance in needs, requirements, and problems of different disability groups; and

WHEREAS the National Planning and Advisory Council for the White House Conference has disclosed its intent to adopt the generalized umbrella approach by stating, "We feel that persons demonstrating a wide interest in and knowledge of programs for the handicapped should be given preference over those with specialized or exclusive interests; and

WHEREAS the generalist approach which focuses on the needs of the handicapped as a homogeneous group is not in the best interest of the blind who have a unique disability and are primarily handicapped by social attitudes—not physical barriers, mental inability, or conditions requiring specialized medical care: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization calls upon the White House Conference staff and its National Planning and Advisory Council to recognize and demonstrate appreciation for the special needs and unique problems of the blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization hereby petitions the staff and National Planning and Advisory Council of the White House Conference to provide for distinct disability groups such as the blind as the plans for the White House Conference and the state conferences are fully developed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state affiliates and local chapters of this organization do all in their power to secure representation of the organized blind among the delegates selected for the National White House Conference; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President and the officers of this organization work closely with the national staff and Planning and Advisory Council to insure that the interests of the blind will be made known in all aspects of the White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals.

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**RESOLUTION 76-23**

WHEREAS Senator Robert Griffin of Michigan has announced his intent to propose an amendment to H.R. 3348, which amendment would exempt the "poppy" programs of VFW and the American Legion from requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act relating to the payment of minimum wages to disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS the Griffin Amendment would adversely affect blinded veterans in those programs at Veterans' Administration Hospitals where disabled veterans make poppies which are collected by the American Legion and the VFW and used in fundraising by these two organizations; and

WHEREAS the Griffin Amendment would adversely affect all blind Americans by further establishing the principle that the blind and physically disabled are not entitled to the minimum wage—a right which all other citizens have; and

WHEREAS the Griffin Amendment is not in keeping with the efforts of many in the Congress and the long-standing policy of this organization to guarantee the minimum wage to all who work: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization strongly opposes exemption of the American Legion and VFW "poppy" program from the minimum wage requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers of this organization do all in their power to oppose the Griffin Amendment to H.R. 3348 in order that there not be a further waiver of the coverage of blind and physically disabled workers under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

**RESOLUTION 76-24**

WHEREAS the National Federation of the Blind has always battled unjust and illegal discrimination against blind persons; and

WHEREAS there have been many instances throughout the United States where blind persons have been denied the right to rent safety deposit boxes and have been denied other bank services solely because of blindness; and

WHEREAS blindness should not be a factor under any circumstances in determining which customers utilize banking services: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that the Federation

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condemns and deplores any bank's unjust and illegal discriminatory policies and acts against blind people; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Federation of the Blind urges the president of each state affiliate to inform the state banking commission, or equivalent agency, of any discriminatory practices against the blind, and request said agency to take action preventing the continuation of unjust banking practices.

#### RESOLUTION 76-25

WHEREAS the policies and practices of state civil rights commissions, or the equivalents thereof, affect the lives of thousands of blind and otherwise handicapped individuals in every state; and

WHEREAS the blind and otherwise disabled are the best qualified to speak on their respective problems and the proper solutions for those problems; and

WHEREAS for this reason the National Federation of the Blind and other organizations of the disabled have been established and are maintained to speak for the blind and disabled respectively; and

WHEREAS such organizations are ready, willing, and able to maintain continued consultation with such agencies in the formulation of guidelines, policies, and practices to be adopted by such agencies: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this Federation strongly urges civil rights commissions, or equivalents thereof, in every state, and their staffs, to immediately adopt measures that will assure that on-going consultation with representatives of the National Federation of the Blind and organizations of other disabled persons be established and continued in formulating guidelines and policies governing the protection of the civil rights of the blind and otherwise disabled; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each state affiliate seek to further the purposes of this Resolution by formalizing relationships between itself and appropriate state agencies.

#### RESOLUTION 76-26

WHEREAS most of the dog guide schools in this Nation maintain that it is their duty and right to retain the title of ownership to the dog guides which they provide to the blind; and

WHEREAS the Seeing Eye of Morristown, New Jersey, one of the most prestigious dog guide schools in the world, has long maintained the policy of *not* retaining title of ownership to the dog guides which they provide to the blind; and

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WHEREAS dog guides represent a proven and effective means of independent travel for blind persons; and

WHEREAS it is demeaning and intimidating to blind dog guide users to be denied the right to own outright their dog guides: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization deplores and condemns the archaic attitude displayed by many dog guide schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization endorses the transfer of titles to dog guides from the schools to the dog guide users; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers of this Federation are instructed to take steps to remedy this harmful practice; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the affiliates are urged to work to change the laws within their states to the end that dog guide users shall own their own dog guides.

#### RESOLUTION 76-27

WHEREAS a reader is indispensable in a blind client's rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS some rehabilitation agencies prohibit blind clients from hiring relatives to read, and thus work an undue hardship on the blind client: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that the National Federation of the Blind goes on record as opposing this practice; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization urges rehabilitation agencies to cease this deplorable practice.

#### RESOLUTION 76-28

WHEREAS it is demeaning to the blind and disabled who are applicants for or recipients of rehabilitation services to be required to reveal personal and financial information; and

WHEREAS it is common practice for rehabilitation agency personnel as a matter of course to elicit such information from all applicants for rehabilitation services without regard to whether an applicant is applying for needs-factor services or for services which require no means test: Now, therefore,

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BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this Federation deplores this unconscionable practice and urges rehabilitation agencies to issue rules forbidding the harmful practice of inquiring into an individual's financial affairs except in those instances in which such inquiry is required as a condition precedent for needs-factor services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization recognizes the necessity of permitting inquiry about whether an applicant is receiving Supplemental Security Income or Disability payments insofar as such inquiry bears upon trust fund reimbursements to rehabilitation agencies.

#### RESOLUTION 76-29

WHEREAS it is now an established fact in this country that blind people are normal people and that, with proper training and opportunity, the average blind person can do the ordinary job in the average place of business and can compete on terms of absolute equality with his sighted neighbor (hundreds of blind people are currently successfully employed as college professors, teachers, lawyers, engineers, computer programmers, businessmen, secretaries, machinists, et cetera); and further, that blindness is a social rather than a physical problem; and

WHEREAS an implicit corollary to the above statement of fact is that the otherwise qualified blind person can compete successfully at the college or university level if he is given the opportunity to do so, and can compete without reliance upon special arrangements or provision of services by university personnel (the blind student can and should secure his own readers, et cetera); and

WHEREAS some universities in the Nation have established programs aimed at caring for and custodializing the blind and other physically handicapped college students (for example, the University of Illinois has established a program under which disabled students, in addition to meeting academic requirements for enrollment, *must* pass psychological and aptitude tests, *must* accept counseling, orientation services, and in general *must* permit university officials to run their academic and private lives); and

WHEREAS the members of this organization find such practices not only degrading and demeaning but also odious and ridiculous; and

WHEREAS in the past we have found that what begins as a voluntary venture rapidly becomes a mandatory millstone which holds us down and out at a time when we are fighting to climb up and in; and

WHEREAS through the activities of the National Federation of the Blind the United States Congress has recently amended the Higher Education Act as follows:

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**Section 904. Prohibition Against Discrimination Against the Blind.**—No person in the United States shall, on the ground of blindness or severely impaired vision, be denied admission in any course of study by a recipient of Federal financial assistance for any education program or activity, provided, however, that nothing herein shall be construed to require any such institution to provide any special services to such person because of his blindness or visual impairment;

and

WHEREAS the blind through personal experience are most acutely aware of their needs and know best what to expect of programs designed to serve the blind, and further, that we the blind are speaking only for the blind (we do not have the right to speak for any other group): Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that since the job of colleges and universities is to educate, not rehabilitate, students, these institutions should not involve themselves in special programs for the blind or programs for the handicapped which include the blind whether mandatorily or voluntarily. Rather we desire the opportunity to compete with our sighted fellows in the educational process, devising for ourselves such methods and techniques as are essential to our success, since in the future we will necessarily compete with sighted people in the predominantly sighted world without benefit of special assistance. These programs can only serve to separate and stigmatize blind people, not mainstream and integrate them as the goals of the programs suggest. We can only, therefore, condemn and deplore any program the goal of which is to provide special help for the blind. Furthermore, we believe that any program established by a college or university should serve the general student body. As an example, the establishment of private and semi-private reading rooms in the library might be considered. These rooms would provide a more studious atmosphere for sighted students as well as for blind students with readers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if specialized services are forced upon us, this organization take all possible steps to eliminate such oppressive and burdensome action by going to the courts, if necessary, in order to protect the rights which are guaranteed to us in the Constitution of the United States and in Section 904 of the Higher Education Act.

#### RESOLUTION 76-30

WHEREAS, over the past twelve months, the fundamental philosophical differences which have separated the National Federation of the Blind and the United States Department of State concerning the equal employment of blind persons in the foreign service have hardened and become more clearly defined; and

WHEREAS, on the one hand, the Department of State persists in its slavish adherence to the belief that blind persons, when faced with a potential or actual threat, are automatically

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rendered helpless and defenseless, thereby placing the national interest of the United States in extreme jeopardy and thereby making them inherently unfit for foreign service; and

WHEREAS, on the other hand, the National Federation of the Blind knows that blind persons, no less than their sighted counterparts, can function abroad competently, safely, and productively, and are eminently adaptive to unstable political environments, unfamiliar cultures, and changing foreign life styles; and

WHEREAS, even though the U.S. Department of State has agreed (albeit with unseemly condescension and sulking reluctance) to open its Washington-based positions to blind candidates, it has placed its first blind employee, a woman with a Ph.D. qualification, in no more than a GS-7 position, in an apparent and fruitless attempt to hoodwink the organized blind movement into believing that under-employment is somehow less a violation of basic human and civil rights than outright rejection from employment; and

WHEREAS, although in a meeting with representatives of the National Federation of the Blind on March 11, 1976, Department of State officials promised to contact the NFB in a good-faith effort to identify overseas positions in which blind persons might be placed, they have failed to make any such contacts; and

WHEREAS, at that same meeting, Department of State officials flatly, unequivocally, and unabashedly rejected as absurd and ridiculous the very notion of blind persons being employed as Foreign Service Officers and being subject to worldwide availability; and

WHEREAS the Department of State's persistent practice of discrimination flies in the face of the principle of equal protection embodied in the United States Constitution, the affirmative action policy embodied in Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and other pronouncements of the Federal Government regarding equal employment of minority groups; and

WHEREAS once again, this year, the Secretary of State has, with shameless arrogance and stubborn mulishness, refused to send to the annual Convention of the NFB even so much as a silent observer, let alone a personal emissary with the power to speak authoritatively, under the pretext that the physical requirements for employment established by the Department of State are currently being studied jointly by the Department and the Inter-Agency Committee on Employment of the Handicapped: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization condemns and deplores the Department of State's continuing prejudice and discrimination against blind candidates for employment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization believes that the time is over for research, experimentation, trial periods, and studies of the employment of blind persons in the

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foreign service, and that the time has come for the Department of State to bite the bullet and face up to its unavoidable responsibility to engage in good-faith negotiations with the National Federation of the Blind and hire qualified blind persons in substantial numbers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of this organization explore all possible avenues of resolving this issue through diplomatic colloquy, administrative pressure based on existing non-discrimination laws and regulations, initiation of legislative action, and litigation, to insure that this discriminatory policy is permanently and irrevocably eliminated, and that blind Americans be treated as first-class citizens not only within the United States but also in its embassies and consulates throughout the world.

#### RESOLUTION 76-31

Withdrawn by authors.

#### RESOLUTION 76-32

WHEREAS museums play a vital role in the cultural, intellectual, and recreational life of all Americans, including blind Americans; and

WHEREAS many museums across the country continue to deny blind visitors access, or attempt to segregate them through the use of "special" exhibits; and

WHEREAS Federal money is used to support many museums throughout the country; and

WHEREAS the Smithsonian Institution has been working closely with the National Federation of the Blind, both by promoting the integration of blind visitors into museums, and by making Federation policy a cornerstone of its program: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization commends the Smithsonian Institution for its efforts on behalf of blind persons wishing to visit museums; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization, in the future, actively oppose the granting of Federal funds to those museums which continue to exclude or segregate blind visitors, and actively support and encourage the efforts of those museums which genuinely strive to treat blind persons as normal visitors.

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## RESOLUTION 76-33

WHEREAS the American Foundation for the Blind is the parent organization of the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped; and

WHEREAS there is evidence that the AFB has found it necessary to curtail services in its programs due to the current economic crisis; and

WHEREAS a sizeable portion or more than \$150,000 of NAC's annual budget comes from funds appropriated by the AFB; and

WHEREAS NAC is a self-appointed group which accredits social service agencies serving the blind while ignoring the needs of the blind, the very group it professes to serve, resulting in the accreditation of many agencies which are considered by the blind to be among the worst in the Nation; and

WHEREAS the National Federation of the Blind, the largest consumer organization of the blind in this Nation, endeavors to seek full and equal treatment and opportunity for the blind; and

WHEREAS the NFB has not to the present taken direct action against the AFB's substantial moral and financial support of NAC: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization pursue those proper and lawful actions necessary to have the AFB withdraw its support of NAC; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that vigorous efforts be made to discover the identity of all groups and individuals making financial contributions to the AFB to the end that such groups and individuals may be informed of the true nature of NAC and the uses to which the funds of the AFB are being put in its financial and moral support of NAC so that such groups and individuals, in making contributions to the AFB, will do so in full knowledge of the facts.

## RESOLUTION 76-34

Defeated by the Convention.

## RESOLUTION 76-35

WHEREAS the quality of library services is of immeasurable importance to every blind person in the United States; and

WHEREAS the Library of Congress, Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, has established a network of regional libraries to provide such services to the blind; and

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WHEREAS the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped has only a limited quantity of books to give regional libraries for circulation to blind readers; and

WHEREAS the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped is now encouraging regional libraries to establish subregional libraries which must be supplied with books from already meager collections: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization goes on record as opposing such subregional libraries; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Federation affiliates are encouraged to seek to establish consumer-oriented committees for the purpose of negotiating with the staff of each regional library to strengthen the regional library system.

#### RESOLUTION 76-36

WHEREAS thirty-six years ago Dr. Jacobus tenBroek founded the National Federation of the Blind, and for the rest of his life was to devote to it his immense talent and tireless energy; and

WHEREAS his influence, his ideas, his philosophy, and his spirit are still the heart of our movement; and

WHEREAS it was he, more than anyone else, who, for the blind, proclaimed liberty throughout the land, and set for us those goals of security, equality, and opportunity which still bind us together in mutual effort and common cause: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled in the City of Los Angeles, California, on this sixth day of July 1976, the sixty-fifth anniversary of his birth, that this Federation commemorate Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, friend to many of us, benefactor of us all, whose very name symbolizes all that is best in our movement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we celebrate his life, recognize his contributions, and confirm his ideals by our renewed commitment to press on toward our goals, and his.

#### RESOLUTION 76-37

WHEREAS, given a positive belief in blindness and the proper training, blind persons can compete on terms of total equality; and

WHEREAS blind students have undertaken college training and have graduated successfully from institutions of higher learning over the past several generations; and

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WHEREAS, despite the above-stated truths, blind students have increasingly been custodialized, patronized, and controlled by special programs for the blind and handicapped on college campuses, since such programs tend to segregate blind students from their sighted peers; and

WHEREAS the American Council on Education has proposed that Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provide in its regulations that a particular institution be designated within each state or region as the primary facility for providing services to handicapped students, thereby stripping blind students of the freedom to attend the colleges of their choice: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this ninth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization denounces and opposes the recommendations put forth by the American Council on Education proposing separate colleges for the handicapped; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization take all steps necessary to secure the defeat of any administrative proposal, or legislation, similar to the recommendation of the American Council on Education, or any other proposal which has the effect of segregating or controlling the lives of blind college students.

#### RESOLUTION 76-38

WHEREAS, on May 17, 1976, the Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, published in the *Federal Register* a notice of key issues, draft regulations, explanatory materials, and an inflationary impact statement—all related to the implementation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and

WHEREAS the Office for Civil Rights attempted to inform the blind of this rule-making procedure by producing and distributing Braille and recorded materials; and

WHEREAS, in preparing these materials, the Office for Civil Rights elected to provide in Braille and recorded form only a portion of the material which was published in the *Federal Register*—not brailleing or recording the interpretive matter or the inflationary impact statement; and

WHEREAS blind persons, for whom these materials were especially prepared, were not informed that only a part of the entire document was being made available to them, thus being led to believe that everything distributed to the sighted was also distributed to the blind; and

WHEREAS not publishing the same documents in Braille and recorded form which are published in print while failing to provide notification of this fact, constitutes nothing short of censorship and places the blind at a great disadvantage in preparing adequate and responsive comments on the May 17 notice: Now, therefore,

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- BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this sixth day of July 1976 in the City of Los Angeles, California, that this organization commends the Office for Civil Rights for its efforts to reach out to the blind with information about rules and regulations which affect them in a form they can read for themselves; and
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization voices its strong objection to the Office for Civil Rights for its failure to provide blind persons with all of the material published related to this notice, and failing to notify the blind of this fact; and
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization calls upon the Office for Civil Rights to distribute in Braille and recorded form the full text of all future notices and/or final regulations.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION,  
AND WELFARE,  
OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS,  
*Washington, D.C., July 16, 1976.*

KENNETH JERNIGAN,  
*President, National Federation  
of the Blind,  
Des Moines, Iowa.*

DEAR MR. JERNIGAN: This note is in regard to our telephone conversation of July 16, 1976. The information Mr. Gerry had in explanation of why the Braille booklet was incomplete was in error. The Library of Congress was in no way connected with the decision to exclude part of the *Federal Register* document on Section 504. Mrs. Dorothy Dransman of the Clovernook Home and School for the Blind told me that she couldn't handle the total package (260 pages double-spaced) in Braille in the timeframe necessary for the comment period. Because of this we decided to cut the package down.

In my effort to get the Braille project rolling, I neglected to point out that it didn't include everything which appeared

in the *Federal Register*. I can only say I promise to do better next time.

Please try to reflect this error when you print your resolution in September.

Martin Gerry will send you an official letter explaining this issue when he returns to Washington next week.

Sincerely,

DONALD C. McLEARN,  
*Office of Public Affairs.*

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION,  
AND WELFARE,  
OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS,  
*Washington, D.C., July 23, 1976.*

KENNETH JERNIGAN,  
*President, National Federation  
of the Blind,  
Des Moines, Iowa.*

DEAR MR. JERNIGAN: It was a pleasure to meet you at the National Federation of

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the Blind Convention in Los Angeles July 6, 1976. The events were well organized and the proceedings went well.

I must report an error that was made in your resolution concerning HEW's Office for Civil Rights and the Library of Congress. As it turns out, the Library of Congress was mistakenly cited for limiting the scope of the Braille printing of the 504 draft regulation. They had nothing to do with the Braille project, but were very helpful to us in narrating the master tape for the audio-disc version of the regulation.

The decision on the length of the Braille document was made because of the printing limitations at Clovernook Home and School for the Blind in view of the extremely tight timeframe within which we were

working. The failure to present a notification of exactly what was and what was not included in the document was indeed an oversight and was in no way meant to appear as an expurgated version. If the entire *Federal Register* document had been produced, it would not have been available until after the comment period had ended.

I would be most appreciative if the resolution would stand corrected when it is printed in September.

My sincere apologies for any unfortunate misunderstanding of the situation.

Sincerely yours,

MARTIN H. GERRY,  
*Director.*

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NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND  
2652 SHASTA ROAD  
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94708

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